R. S.

DISCOURSES

(DELIVERED IN SATSANG)

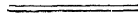
OR

(SATSANG -KE- UPADEŚA)

BY

His Holiness Sahabji Maharaj
Sir Anand Sarup Kt.

PART II

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH UNDER THE AUTHORITY
OF THE
RADHASOAMI SATSANG SABHA, DAYALBAGH

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HIS HOLINESS SAHABJI MAHARAJ SIR ANAND SARUP Kt
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R. S.

PREFACE

The present book, Discourses (Delivered in Satsang) Part II, is the translation of Part II of the book 'Satsang-ke-Updesa' of His Holiness Sahabji Maharaj, the 5th Revered Leader of the Radhasoami Faith, first published in 1928. Translation of Part I of the book 'Satsang-ke-Updesa' has already been published in August last.

The book 'Satsang-ke-Updesa' contains some of the discourses delivered day after day in the evening Satsang by His Holiness Sahabji Maharaj. Some of these were published occasionally in Volumes 2 and 3 of the Prem Pracharak also. Finally, these were collected and published in book form as Satsang-ke-Updesa' in three parts.

The Discourses included in Part II, like those in Part I, cover a very wide range of subjects and deal with them in a very simple and charming manner. They explain the principles of the Radhasoami Faith and also explain the attitude that Satsangis should have towards various present-day problems, both as individuals and as members of Satsang community. It will be observed from a perusal of these Discourses that the outlook of the Satsang regarding various problems and matters is thoroughly and genuinely religious and refreshingly simple and straight-forward and the language and style are also equally appropriate and forceful The English translation now being published cannot, of course, claim to possess all the qualities of the original work for obvious reasons.

In the light of what has been said above, the English translation now being published as 'Discourses' Part II will be of very great help to seekers in understanding the principles of the Radhasoami Faith and to Satsangis in developing

right understanding of those principles and then to mould their conduct and bearing accordingly.

In the original book some portions of original Sanskrit books were referred to in the text and their translation was given but the original texts were not given in many cases. In this English translation, however, these original texts also have been given in the footnotes at the bottom of the page on which they are referred to.

All quotations from original books, whether they appear in the text of the book or in the footnotes, have been given in original and also transcribed in Roman script, so that those who are not able to read Devanagari and Persian scripts may be able to read them if they feel interested to do so. The English translation of the quotations given in the footnotes is not given in the notes as it appears in the text of the book.

Footnotes have also been added, wherever necessary, to explain the peculiar significance of certain technical words and expressions and also to clarify some statements of the text.

It is hoped the publication of the translation of this Part II 'Satsang-ke-Updesa' into English will help English-knowing seekers in understanding the teachings of the Radhasoami Faith in some detail and from different points of view and will be helpful to those seekers and Satsangis also who do not know Hindi and Urdu well enough.

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DISCOURSES
(DELIVERED IN SATSANG)
(PART II)

DISCOURSE 1

WHO IS COMPETENT TO APPRECIATE THE TEACHINGS OF THE RADHASOAMI FAITH ?

It is observed in this world that thorny bushes which neither blossom nor produce any fruit, which afford neither shade nor comfort of any kind to anyone grow at some places. These bushes are only fit for being cut and burnt in an oven as ordinary fuel. But on the other hand there are places where fruit trees grow, which at proper time provide shade and coolness to men, whose sweet-smelling flowers make the entire surrounding atmosphere fragrant, whose fruits satisfy the hunger of many people and the juice of which is relished by them and on whose branches birds sit and chirp and enjoy life and, when these trees dry up, men cut them into beams and rafters and use their waste cuttings as good fuel. In other words, their whole life is spent in giving happiness and relief and every part of their bodies affords benefit and comfort to others.

This kind of difference is seen not only among various trees and plants, but among animals as well. On one side, there are carnivorous animals like lions, wolves, etc. who only tear down poor, harmless animals and do no other work and on the other, there are poor animals like cows, goats etc. who subsist on a handful of grass only and provide us

with milk, ghee, butter etc. and every part of whose bodies is useful to men.

In the same way, among human beings too there are some who are blood-thirsty, cruel and mischievous and others who are soft-hearted and kind, who toil day and night to earn some money and spend a sufficient portion of it on providing the needs of others and giving them comfort. It is owing to the munificence of these persons that we see at different places and in every city and town wells, tanks, temples, mosques, *gurdwaras*[1], *dharmaśalas*[2], messes[3], *sadabrat*[4], schools, colleges, orphanages, *gośalas* etc. established as works of public charity.

It is among these good people that one comes across some such devotees who sit in a secluded place and spend an hour or so in the worship of their Supreme Father—the True Creator. Some of them repeat some holy name while counting the beads of a rosary, some repeat internally *mantras*[5] or verses from holy books, some perform contemplation mentally and some study or sing from religious books. *Sadhs*[6] and Saints[7]

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1. The word 'gurdwārā means the 'dvārā', literally door or place of the Guru i.e. the Spiritual Teacher. The word is used by the followers of the Sikh religion for the Assembly Halls they have established in different towns etc. 2 Dharmaśalas are dwelling places established by philanthropic persons where people are lodged without charge 3 The Hindi expression is 'लंगर' (langar) It refers to the arrangement for preparation and supply of community meals at times of religious congregations Meals are generally supplied free of charge. 4. Arrangement for distribution of free food to beggars etc. 5. Mystic formulae. 6 The word is derived from the Sanskrit verb साध् (Sādh), 'to go straight to goal', 'to straighten a path', 'to guide correctly' It refers to a person who performs spiritual practices and has also attained high spiritual status 7 The Hindi word is सन्त (Sant). The English word 'Saint' expresses the idea conveyed by the Hindi word to some extent. The word has been used in India for persons of very high spiritual attainments, particularly those connected with Bhakti Mārga and those who have either attained or have descended from the Region of Pure Spirituality.

make their advent in this world from time to time in order to help these good people and to put them on the right path. The pleasure these people derive in meeting the *Sadhs* etc. is unbounded and the grace which the *Sadhs* shower on these good people is also indescribable.

Evidently, it is only such good souls that appreciate the discourses and teachings of Saints and recognise their high spiritual status. And this is not a new thing, because a nightingale only and not an ordinary sparrow can appreciate a flower and a moth only and not an ordinary fly can appreciate a flame.

DISCOURSE 2

PROGRESS OF THE SATSANG DEPENDS ON THE GRACE OF MERCIFUL RADHASOAMI

We should remember that the number of well-wishers as well as enemies of the *Satsang*[1] would go on increasing as our community progresses and that the enemies would be on the look-out to and would also attempt to cause loss and damage to us in many ways, but the most serious blow to us would come when we fall down from our ideals and adopt the ways of worldly men. It should be noted that we should not care at all for false scandal or reputation nor should we be anxious to secure the help or support of any person or community Our care should be to see that our minds do

1. Satsang (Sat Sang) is association (Sang) with Sat i e. Sat Purusha (Supreme Being) or the Satguru (Spiritual Teacher). Satsang also refers to congregational divine service conducted under the presidentship of the Satguru or some Saint. The Organization where arrangements exist for such association with some Spiritual Teacher or for holding such congregational divine service is also called 'Satsang' 'Satsang' here refers to the Radhasoami Satsang i.e. Satsang established by the followers of the Radhasoami Faith

not become a prey to passion, anger, greed, infatuation, pride, jealousy, enmity etc. and we should, like true devotees, continue to perform all our necessary duties with humility and firmness.

Some days back a newspaper published from Amritsar advised us that a religion makes progress through opposition to the Government and in proof cited the example of the *Arya Samaj*[1]. We do not agree with the views of the esteemed newspaper nor do we believe that the *Arya Samaj* made progress through opposition to the Government. In our opinion the secret of the progress of the *Arya Samaj* lay in the life of piety and the sacrifices of its founders and followers. History also tells us that a living example has always produced great effect on the masses It is true that the adoption of a particular religion by a king or an emperor may have led to considerable increase in the number of its followers, but does the progress of a religion depend only on an increase in the number of its followers ? At any rate, we do not desire this kind of progress. What we desire is that even though only a few persons may join the *Satsang* but those who join must be such as are really desirous of the realization of the true Supreme Being and are prepared to practise the *Surat Śabda Yoga*[2], whose hearts have no desire for the world, worldly authority and worldly enjoyments and who are ready to sacrifice their body, mind and wealth in the service of the true Lord.

Evidently, such ideas and sentiments cannot be produced in the masses or in a large number of people simply because a religious society offers opposition to the authority of a king or some emperor joins it. Furthermore,

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1. 'Ārya Samāj' is the name of the revivalist movement founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati. The expression literally means 'the Society of Aryans' 2. The expression 'Surat Śabda Yōga' refers to the Yōga practices taught in the Radhasoami Faith It is called Surat Śabda Yōga as the 'Surat' or man's spirit is put into contact with the Śabda i e. the spiritual sound by means of this practice.

we believe that study of books and hearing of lectures and discourses are no doubt useful for human beings but it is impossible that the aforesaid ideas and sentiments would take root in a man's mind as a result of mere reading and listening to lectures. These ideas stay long only if they spring up of their own accord from within the mind and if they are introduced from outside, their stay for any long period is impossible. Therefore no *Satsangi*[1] brother should make any effort whatsoever to get any rich person or big officer initiated into the Radhasoami Faith through persuasion, nor should any *Satsangi* himself join any political agitation and indulge in any rhetorical and tall talk for enhancing the reputation and advancing the progress of the *Satsang*. What is proper for us is that every *Satsangi* should see that his conduct and bearing are quite correct and then simply wait for the grace and mercy of the true Supreme Being. If our Society is carrying on its work with the aid of mind and intellect only, obviously we have no right to exist as a religious society even for a day and the sooner our society perishes the better. But if we are working merely as tools of Merciful Radhasoami and if Radhasoami Name is the name of the true Supreme Being Who is the true Father of all living beings and is the Reservoir of Spirituality, then no person can retard our progress nor can any society or association put us to real harm Of course, if we ourselves fall from our ideals and turn away from the true Supreme Being and if we do not desist from our foolish acts inspite of being warned again and again, the Supreme Being would surely ignore us and entrust others with His holy service[2]

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1 Literally, it means a person who associates with (i e is a sangi of) Sat (i e Satguru or Sat Purusha). 'Satguru' stands for the Religious Preceptor and 'Sat Prusha' for the Supreme Being. Followers of the Radhasoami Faith call themselves and are known as Satsangis 2 The original Hindi word is 'Sevā'. From very ancient times Sevā of the Guru or Satguru has been considered to be a necessary part of the spiritual discipline through which a devotee has to pass Sevā also includes obedience to Satguru's orders and service of mankind

DISCOURSE 3

WHICH RELIGION DO YOU FOLLOW ?

It is true that other people must have put this question to you many times and on all such occasions you satisfied them for the time being by instantly mentioning the name of some faith or religion but probably you never put the question to yourself and obtained an answer. One should know that before being entitled to be called a follower of any faith, it is essential that one should practise and follow its teachings and principles. It is true that it is not possible for every human being to follow a particular path at all times and under all circumstances or bind himself to any particular principles or teachings, but in order that a man may be called a follower of any particular faith, it is essential that he should keep his mind in control and act on the principles of that faith on majority of occasions and whenever he falls from his principles on account of some weakness of his mind or due to circumstances beyond his control, he should, on realizing his weakness or his mistake repent in all sincerity. It is possible that he may not be able to know his weakness or mistake on every occasion and even when he comes to know of his mistake or weakness, he may not feel ashamed or repentant on some occasions for some reason, but for a true devotee it is essential that on stumbling or committing mistakes he should generally be aware of them and on being aware, he should feel repentant. In our opinion, a man is not entitled to call himself a follower of any particular faith if he does not act on these conditions and if anybody steps beyond his right through foolhardiness, he not only acts improperly but he earns bad name for the religion whose follower he claims to be. For example, you will come across many persons who profess faith in one God, *Khuda*[1],

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1. 'Khuda' is Persian word for God.

or *Paramatma*[1], believe Him to be omnipresent and, while believing in the existence of the spirit and admitting it to be the essential element of the human body and while expressing faith in some particular holy book and ancient sages and showing partiality towards their greatness and fame, criticise the holy books and leaders of other faiths day and night, but they have neither the ability to understand nor any desire to adopt the mode of life of these leaders, nor do they make any efforts for the realization of *Atma*[2] and *Paramatma*. On the contrary, if they meet some one from outside their own circle who can tell them the method, they are not ready to hear him, much less to understand him They think that the presence of such a person would falsify their religion and lower the status of the sages in whom they believe. It should be considered how and on what ground such persons as express their belief in sages or holy books or are evidently biased towards them can be called their followers? It is however not our business to expose the mistakes of others. We only want to warn our brothers-in-faith against the wrong trends of the mind. In our opinion belief in the existence of *Paramatma* and *Atma* and faith in ancient sages and books is justified and useful only in the case of that person alone who lives at the feet of those Great Personalities who understand the meaning of the ancient books and learns from them that *Sadhan*[3] or those spiritual practices which are mentioned in these holy books and which enabled the ancient sages to achieve high spiritual merit and also the true object of human existence by getting at least some experience or realization of *Atma* and *Paramatma* in their life-time.

The question now arises, whether a human being can have this kind of realization. The answer is that he can

1 'Paramātmā' is commonly used for God. Just as man's spirit gives life to and sustains the human body, Paramātmā (Parama Ātma i e the Highest Spirit) sustains the creation. Hence, the word stands for Supreme Being 2. Spirit of man. 3. Spiritual practice.

most certainly have such a realization and if any theistic religion in the world is true and if the words of a sage or sages of any such religion are based on his or their personal experience, then our reply needs no verification. But one should remember that reading and understanding holy books, listening to lectures and discourses and studying them and having faith in ancient sages is not sufficient for obtaining such a realization, though these activities are no doubt beneficial and necessary to a certain extent. For this purpose, an internal practice which can awaken the spirit or open the hidden eye (*Divya Chakshu*[1]) is necessary. This objective cannot be achieved by means of the physical senses or through learning or intelligence. Put some pressure on your mind and persuade yourself to seek the protection of a practical Adept and if you have got this privilege already, act on His instructions faithfully, consider Him your true well-wisher, develop true love for Him and perform the practices taught by Him with love and devotion. This alone should be your religion. You can obtain your heart's desire one day by treading this path, otherwise your valuable life would be wasted in useless arguments, disputes and quarrels and you would have nothing to take with you except enmity, malice and jealousy at the time of your departure from this world Was the human body acquired for achieving these objects? Did you take the protection of religion in search of these things? Question yourself today and compel yourself to reply as to what religion you are following. If you realize your mistake, do not be disappointed There is yet time enough to reform yourself. The question then arises, "Where should one search for the practical Adept?" The reply is that you should first search for him in your own surroundings that is, in the company you keep or the society which you attend or in the religion in which you believe. If you do not

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1. 'Divya Chakshu' literally means 'divine eye' It refers to the 6th Chakra, the seat of the spirit in the human body. This Eye is the apparatus through which man can form connection with higher regions.

find any Adept there, you should search for Him in the company or association or in the religious community where you consider it likely to find Him and if you remain unsuccessful there too, you should look for Him in the Radhasoami Satsang, the doors of which are open to all

But then again you may enquire about the place where the quest should be made in the Radhasoami Satsang ? Its reply has already been given above, i e. you should search for Him in the Satsang at the place nearest to you, then in the Satsang where you may expect the fulfilment of your desire and after that, in other places. In following this method the seeker would be put to some trouble but it cannot be helped as there is no other method. No big work can be accomplished without hard labour and trouble. This is the price fixed for obtaining the Vision of the True Supreme Being and the salvation of the human soul. The seeker should not hesitate in paying this price.

DISCOURSE 4

MERIT OF DEVOTION

Huzur Soamiji Maharaj[1] has described the value of devotion in a *Śabda*[2] as follows — (See Sar Bachan[3] (poetry), Bachan 12, *Śabda* 1).

भक्ति महातम सुन मेरे भाई ।
सब संतन ने किया बखान ॥ १ ॥

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1 The name by which the Founder of the Radhasoami Faith is known among the followers of the Faith. He was born in 1818, established the Radhasoami Satsang in 1861 and departed from this world in 1878.
2 The poems of Sar Bachan are termed 'Śabdas' Many Saints of India, e g Kabir Sahab, Nanak Sahab etc have termed the poems they composed as 'Śabdas'. 3. Common name of both the books of Param Guru Soamiji Maharaj One is in poetry and the other in prose.

Bhakti Mahātam sun mere bhāī
Sab Santan ne kiyā bakhān 1

Translation —

Brother, listen about the great dignity of devotion[1] as has been described by all the Saints.

यही मता गुरुमत पहिचानो।
और मते सब झूठ भुलान ॥ २ ॥

Yahī matā gurumat pahichānō
Aur mate sab jhūth bhulān 2

Translation—

The Guru's religion[2] is the path of devotion. Religions other than the path of devotion are entangled in untruths.

बिना भक्ति थोथे सब जानो।
छिलका है मींगी की हान ॥ ३ ॥

Binā bhakti thōthe sab jānō
Chhilkā hai mīngī kī hān 3

Translation —

Being devoid of devotion, they are all of no use. They are like that shell which is without kernel.

ताते भक्ती दृढ़ कर पकड़ो।
और सयानप तजो निदान ॥ ४ ॥
Tāte bhaktī drirh kar pakrō
Aur sayānap tajō nidān 4

Translation —

Hence you should take firmly to the path of devotion and give up your cleverness.

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1. The original Hindi word is 'Bhakti' For attaining salvation or spiritual advancement, three ways have generally been followed, particularly in India. Bhakti Mārga (Path of Devotion) is one of them, the other two being Jñāna Mārga (Path of knowledge) and Karma Mārga (Path of Action) Radhasoami Faith teaches Bhakti Mārga. 2. The religion which the True Guru or Satguru teaches.

भक्ती इश्क प्रेम यह तीनों ।
नाम भेद है रूप समान ॥ ५ ॥

Bhaktī ıshq prem yeh tīnō
Nām bhed haı rūp samān 5

Translatıon—

Bhakti,[1] *Ishq*[2] and *Prem*[3] are all three synonymous, ın which there ıs really no dıfference.

भक्ति भाव यह गुरुमत जानो ।
और मते सब मनमत ठान ॥ ६ ॥

Bhaktı bhāv yeh gurumat ȷānō
Aur mate sab manmat[4] thān 6

Translatıon —

The Guru's relıgıon ıs nothing else than the path of devotıon All other relıgıons are sımply a creatıon of the mind.

प्रेम रूप आतम परमातम ।
भक्ति रूप सतनाम बखान ॥ ७ ॥

Prem rūp Ātam[5] Paramātam[6]
Bhaktı rūp Satnām[7] bakhān 7

Translatıon —

Atma and *Paramatma* are both nothıng but Love and the *Satya Purusha*[7] i.e. the Supreme Beıng is also Love.

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1 Vıde Note 1 on page 10 2 The Persıan word 'Ishq' has been used by Persıan mystıcs for 'bhaktı'. 3 Prem ı e Love. The word 'Prem' has also been used ın the sense of 'bhaktı' or 'ıshq' 4. The relıgıon domınated by man s mınd ı e a relıgıon ın whıch the mınd and ıts desıres are gıven free scope or play. 5. Ātmā ı e man's spırıt. Man's spırıt ıs nothıng but 'Love', as God ıs 'Love' 6. Paramātmā Here the woıd stands for Brahma and not Supreme Beıng 7 'Satnām' ı e Satya Purusha or True Beıng. The expressıon ıs used for the Supreme Beıng.

भक्ती और भगवन्त एक हैं।
प्रेम रूप तू सतगुरु जान ॥ ८ ॥

Bhaktī aur Bhagwant ek haın
Prem rūp tū Satguru jān 8

Translation—

Devotion and *Bhagwant*[1] (the object of devotion), or in other words, Love and the Beloved are both one and the *Satguru*[2] who advises you to follow the path of devotion is also Love and nothing else. Inside His visible body made of bones, flesh and skin, the power of Love is resplendent.

प्रेम रूप तेरा भी भाई।
सब जीवन को योंही मान ॥ ९ ॥

Prem rūp terā bhī bhāī
Sab jīvan kō yōnhī mān 9

Translation—

Brother, thy real form is also Love, and the form of all other living beings is also the same i e. Love.

एक भेद यामें पहिचानो।
कहीं बुंद कहिं लहर समान ॥ १० ॥

Ek bhed yāmen pahıchānō
Kahīn bund kahın lahar samān 10

Translation—

But there is one difference worth pointing out and

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1 The original Hindi word is भगवन्त (Bhagwant) which means 'the Person adored or worshipped'. It also means the 'Deity one worships'.
2. Satguru (Sat Guru) literally means True Guru or True Religious Preceptor. Here it refers to the Sant Satguru, which expression means the Master who either has by means of devotional practices fully developed his spiritual faculties and realized the True Supreme Being and has become one with Him or is possessed of this high status from His birth

it is that, at some places that Love is met with in the size of a drop and at others it resembles a wave or a current. For example, the spirit-entity in man is like a drop of Love and in Brahma Love is like a wave.

कही सिंध सम करे प्रकाशा !
कहीं सोत और पोत कहान ॥ ११ ॥

Kahīn sindh sam kare prakāśā
Kahīn sōt aur pōt kahān 11

Trnnslation—

At some places Love is like an ocean as in the Saints and at another place it is in the form of Infinite Reservoir as in the Supreme Being.

कहि इच्छा परबल होय बैठी ।
कहीं हुई माया बलवान ॥ १२ ॥

Kahin ichchhā parbal hōye baithī
Kahīn huī māyā balvān 12

Translation—

On account of this difference in size, worldly desires predominate at some places as in human beings and *Maya*[1] predominates in another place, e.g. in *Brahma*

एक ठिकाने माया थोड़ी ।
सिंध प्रताप शुद्ध हुई आन ॥ १३ ॥

Ek thikāne māyā thōrī
Sindh pratāp śuddh huī ān 13

Translation—

At one place *Maya* is of no consequence as in *Satya Loka* and there, owing to Love being in the form of an ocean, it has become purified

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1 'Māyā' stands for 'matter'. It is also the name by which the 'Śakti' or creational force of Brahma is known

सोत पोत में माया नाहीं ।
वहाँ प्रेम ही प्रेम रहान ॥ १४ ॥
Sōt pōt men māyā nāhīn
Vahān prem hī prem rahān 14

Translation—

Maya is completely absent in the Infinite Reservoir i e. the Prime Source of Spirituality. Nothing but Love and Love alone exists there.

वह भंडार प्रेम का भारी ।
जा का आदि न अन्त दिखान ॥ १५ ॥
Vah bhandār prem kā bhārī
jākā ādi na ant dikhān 15

Translation—

This Reservoir of *Prem* (Love) is boundless. It has neither a beginning nor an end. It is limitless and beyond comprehension.

बिना सन्त पहुँचे नहि कोई ।
सतगुरु सन्त किया अस्थान ॥ १६ ॥
Binā Sant pahunche nahin kōī
Satguru Sant kiyā asthān 16

Translation—

Saints alone and none else can gain access to this Reservoir. Sant Satguru only has his seat there.

प्रेम भक्ति की ऐसी महिमा ।
ग्रहण करो यह अमृत खान ॥ १७ ॥
Prem bhakti kī aisī mahimā
Grahan karō yeh amrit khān 17

Translation—

Such is the greatness of Love and Devotion that those who follow the path of Love and Devotion reach

this high status. It is therefore meet that you take to this path which is the source of Immortality.

तातै पहले करो भक्ति गुरु ।
पीछे पाओ नाम निशान ॥ १८ ॥

Tāte pahle karō bhakti Guru
Pīchhe pāō nām nishān 18

Translation—

For this reason, it is essential that you should first cultivate devotion of the Guru with sincerity and then after learning the practices of the *Surat Śabda Yoga*[1], try to recognise the Holy Name or *Śabda*, i.e. *Anhad Śabda*[2]".

आरत कर कर गुरू रिझाओ ।
पाओ उनसे प्रेम-निधान ॥ १९ ॥

Ārat kar kar Gurū rijhāō
Pāō unse prem-nidhān 19

Translation —

Then by repeated performance of *Arti*[3], i.e by fixing your gaze on His eyes, secure the grace and pleasure of the Satguru and receive the wealth of Love from Him.

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1 Vide Note 2 on page 4 2 Sounds are of two kinds, viz, those produced by the striking of one thing against another and others for which this striking of one thing against another is not necessary The latter variety are called 'Anāhata' or 'Anhad' and refer to spiritual sounds that reverberate of their own accord 3 The word 'Āratī' is the same as 'Ārat' (आरत) The word 'Ārat' (आरत)is made up of 'ā' (आ) and 'rat' (रत), 'ā' means 'from all sides' and 'rat' means 'absorption' or 'concentration of attention (after withdrawal)' Thus 'Ārat' means 'concentration of attention internally after withdrawal from all sides' 'Ārat' also refers to a devotee's looking on at the face of the Satguru This helps him in withdrawing his attention inwards In a general way, 'Ārat' means harmonization with the Satguru (Spiritual Preceptor) or the Supreme Being.

राधास्वामी कहत सुनाई ।
मिला तुझे अब भक्ती दान ॥ २० ॥

Radhasoamı kahat sunāī
Mılā tujhe ab bhaktī dān 20

Translatıon —

Mercıful Radhasoami has ordained that when you have acted ın this manner, you would be the recipıent of the gıft of devotion or true Love.

The idea ıs, that though it is not possible for a man to reach the destinatıon unaided and by his own efforts by medıtatıng upon an invisible being, but it does not mean that ıt ıs something undesirable to put in one's own efforts or to search for the true Supreme Being. The intention is, that when *Atma*[1], *Paramatma*[2], *Satya Purusha*[3] and the true Supreme Being[4] are all but dıfferent forms of Love, then communion of the *Atma* with the Supreme Being can only be achieved through Love because there is nothing but Love in the sphere of the true Supreme Being and nothıng else can fınd admission there As your spirit or *Atma* ıs a Form of Love, it can no doubt find admission there, but for this you would have to follow the Path of Love or Devotion. If a person makes a proper, impartial and fair use of the lıght and experience he has and makes a start, then the true Supreme Being would sooner or later put him in contact with the true Satguru and then acting accordıng to his instructions cheerfully, that person would one day obtain his heart's desire. In short, there ıs no other path save the path of devotion for obtaining the realizatıon of the true Supreme Being.

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1 Man's spırıt 2 Refers here to Brahma Purusha. 3 Refers to the Presıdıng Deıty of the Sat Loka, one of the 6 Lokas of the Pure Spırıtual Regıon (Nırmal Chetan Deśa). 4. Refers to Mercıful Radhasoamı

DISCOURSE 5

THE METHOD OF DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN TRUTH AND UNTRUTH

Several persons, who are connected with one religious society or the other, emphatically state that it is their prime duty to distinguish between truth and untruth, i.e. between what is true and what is false If any person really acts on this principle, he is a very fortunate man and many people can be immensely benefitted through him but the difficulty is that some of these people consider themselves as all-wise or all-knowing and consider the followers of other religions as ignorant and only partly wise. When they hear about the fame and greatness of the venerable leader of any other religion, they at once become extremely angry and irritated and though they assert that they desire to discriminate between truth and untruth, their real intention is to kill the ideas and principles of others and to show their own importance. It should however be noted that discrimination between truth and untruth can be done in two ways only. One is that you should go as seeker to a person more able and experienced than yourself and with his permission submit the ideas held in your mind and seek advice and then think well over the reply you get and thereafter, place your doubts if any before him in a proper manner. You should thus continue putting questions and seeking replies until all your doubts are cleared or the sage forbids further questions or refuses to reply. Maulana Rumi[1] has said :

هرچه گوئی شکل و استفسار گو   با شهنشاهان تو مسکین وار گو

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1 A great mystic and poet of Persia, who was born in 1207 A.D. and died in 1273 A D In 1212 his father took him to meet a well-known mystic, Khwājā Farīd-ud-Dīn Attār Later on, Maulana Rumi came into contact with Shams-i-Tabriz, another great mystic, and became his disciple He used to write poetry when he became extremely distressed due to separation from his Teacher

Harche gōī shaklō istifsār gō Bā Shahanshāhān tū miskeenwār gō.

Translation—

"Whatever you say, should be said in the form of questions;
When you talk to Great Saints, you should do so with humility."

If you firmly believe that a particular person is following a wholly wrong path, then your visit to him as a seeker would be simply useless and you should never go as a seeker to such person.

The other way is that a man who considers you to be an elderly person comes to you to remove his doubts and seek your help in deciding between truth and untruth. In such circumstances, it is proper for you to make sure whether the visitor has come really as a seeker or he simply wants to display his ability and to boast of his talents. In the first case, you should help the seeker by giving him as much time and attention as possible and in the second case it would be proper for you to refuse to engage in conversation with him. But it is really funny that many persons ignore all these things and unnecessarily indulge in argumentation and debate with others. The result is that, after argumentation for hours and even days, the matter remains where it was and the hearts of the parties are filled with unnecessary bitterness. As a matter of fact, men of this nature neither have any desire to distinguish truth from untruth nor do they know how to do it and excepting when they are engaged in discussions, they have no concern with the ideals of their religion nor have they anything to do with its teachings. However, to please themselves, they sometimes say that their public discussions render immense benefit to many people. In fact, this claim of theirs also is not correct. He alone can discriminate between truth and untruth for others who, after discriminating between the two for himself, has accepted

truth fully well How can a person who is himself in the dark show the right path to others with the help of argumentation and reasoning ?

DISCOURSE 6

HOW TO ESCAPE FROM THE IMPACT OF DESIRES

सुख सिंध की सैर का स्वाद तब पाइहै चाह का चौतरा भूल जावे।
बीज के माहि ज्यों वृक्ष विस्तार यों चाह के माहिं सब रोग आवे॥
दृढ़ वैराग में होय आरूढ़ मन चाह के चौतरे आग दीजे।
कहें कबीर यों होय निरबासना तत्त सों रत्त होय काज कीजे॥

Sukh sindh kī sair kā swād tab pāihai chāh kā chautarā bhūl jāwe,
Bīj ke māhen jyōn vrikshvistār yōn chāh ke māhen sab rōg āwe
Drirh vairāg men hōe ārūṛ mana chāh ke chautare āg dīje,
Kahen Kabir yōn hōye nirbāsnā tatt sōn ratt hōye kāj kīje.

Translation —

Kabir Sahab says in the couplet—

You can enjoy a trip to the Ocean of Bliss when you abandon desires or passions. As a tree exists inside a seed in its subtle form, so the element of all troubles exists inside desires in a subtle form. Acting with unflinching renunciation[1] and determination in your mind, you should burn the desires and on thus becoming free from desires and, getting absorbed

1. The word in the original is 'vairāg', the correct Sanskrit of which is 'vairāgya'. It means 'freedom from worldly desires and indifference to worldly objects or worldly loss or gain' In the Religion of Saints, it does not refer to mortification of the body or asceticism as it is often taken to mean by common people in India.

into your spiritual essence[1], you should achieve your salvation.

No doubt, it is the sincere desire of every one that he should dive deep into the ocean of true and Supreme Bliss and become free from all troubles and miseries for ever, but according to the teachings of the Religion of Saints a person must first remove the dirt of worldly desires from his heart by his own efforts if he wants to attain this condition. On this, the question arises how can one remove desires from his heart. Desires can be removed from the heart by means of a spirit of renunciation. But then how to develop the spirit of renunciation ? There are many methods of doing this. For example,

First, the spirit of firm renunciation develops in a man's heart when he becomes sorely sick of worldly possessions or sees others involved in dire distress

Secondly, hatred for the world is created inside the heart when one listens to the discourses of Great Sages or Saints

Thirdly, a man easily develops an attitude of renunciation from the world when good sense awakens in him as a result of the grace granted by the true Supreme Being on his having done some extraordinarily good act in the present life or when the good *samskaras*[2] of his previous lives show their effect.

Fourthly, a person automatically begins to find worldly

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1. The original word is 'tatt' i.e 'tatva', which means the real substance or essence. It is used for the spirit, as spirit force is the essence of all existence and also of the whole creation 2. 'Samskāras' are impressions or conformations which operate to bring about re-birth and which control the actions of living men 'Samskāras' of previous lives remain piled up and produce fresh cravings and desires and these again lead to further actions and thus to new 'samskāras' Good 'samskāras' are those which lead a man towards higher or spiritual ideals.

enjoyments and pleasures quite insipid when after performing internal practices with faith and zeal for some time, he experiences the joy and bliss of higher spiritual planes

It should however be borne in mind that unless the grace of the True Supreme Being is vouchsafed in full measure to a *Jiva*,[1] the spirit of renunciation cannot stay continuously for long in his heart, for not only worldly pleasures and enjoyments pull the attention of men towards themselves with great force but the creational current also, which functions within the creation and sustains it and the flow of which is outwards and downwards, is pushing the *Jivas* night and day towards material objects. The poor *Jivas* thus find themselves helpless and do not know what to do. This is the reason why we read and hear about many *Rishis*, *Munis* and devotees who on particular occasions fell into the meshes of *Maya*. On reading these words, a seeker may very well have grave doubts about his ability to remain firm and to reach the final goal, but he should not feel disturbed. In ancient ages, the sages who stumbled and fell from their ideal did not fall for ever and when they stood up once again, they did not fall later on. If a man falls on account of his innate weaknesses while treading the path, he is not at all to blame. He alone, who for any reason whatsoever sits listlessly inside his house and makes no attempt to tread the path, is to be blamed. If through good luck a person meets a true *Sadh* or Saint and develops true faith in him to some extent and if he begins also to love him sincerely just as one loves his children, his brothers or his parents, he can pull through easily If he does so, the chances for his fall would be much less and secondly the *Sadh* or Saint

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1 The word is derived from the Sanskrit verb 'जिव्' (jiv), 'to live'. The term 'Jīva' (or Jīvātmā) stands for the condition or consciousness which comes into existence as a result of the co-existence of Self (i e spirit) and not-Self (i e matter) In life, ordinary man has no experience of the spirit or its functions and generally mistakes the Jīvātmā for the spirit. Thus 'Jīva' stands for 'man' and also for all living creatures

would at once take care of the devotee as soon as he does fall. There would not be many occasions for his fall because due to the establishment of love with a true *Sadh* or Saint, the attention of the devotee is repeatedly drawn towards His holy feet and this helps to remove worldly impurities of every kind from his heart and elevate his spirit to the higher plane. As soon as the consciousness of the higher plane is achieived, he gets real awakening and once so awakened, he does not fall.

DISCOURSE 7

RELIGION OF SAINTS[1] PROVIDES AN EASY WAY FOR ACQUIRING SPIRITUAL MERIT

It is man's nature that he wants to do a job with the least amount of labour and in the shortest possible time and it is on account of this, that various kinds of conveyances have been invented and different kinds of things have been devised. For example, just consider the case of a bullock cart. It is a contrivance with the aid of which man can easily transport many maunds of weight from one place to another. Until the bullock cart was invented, man had to lift all his loads on his head, back or shoulders and as his physical strength was limited, the transport of any load of 20 or 25 maunds to any distance was a sufficiently difficult task and required much time but man, by and by, invented the bullock cart, horse carriage, railway etc., and thus made his difficult task very easy. As the Supreme Being has bestowed man with such intellect that he can control other animals and the

1 The teachings of Saints of India e g Kabir Sahab, Nanak Sahab, Jagjivan Sahab, Paltu Sahab etc. are quite similar to the teachings of the Radhasoami Faith. The expression 'Religion of Saints' (or 'Sant Mat' in Hindi) is the common expression used for the teachings of all these Saints as well as of the Radhasoami Faith.

forces of nature and use them to advantage, so his invention of superior instruments to save himself from useless waste of time and labour over any job is wholly correct and praiseworthy. It is however noticed that some men in their attempt to avoid labour and hard work resort to improper actions and try to achieve results easily and as quickly as possible by using unfair means. For example, some cultivators, on finding that their work involves much hard labour and brings insufficient profit, begin to commit thefts and wayside robberies and many shopkeepers take to gambling and speculation in order to get rich quickly and similarly some persons adopt the profession of a beggar to avoid work and to lead an easy life. No doubt, while engaged in the aforesaid activities, these fools also have in their hearts the same aim which has brought about inventions of various kinds in the world but the means these people adopt for the realization of their aim have been considered to be wrong and improper according to moral standards and the social code, for they themselves and the society as a whole come to harm in the long run because of those means

It should be noted that most men act in this unintelligent manner in the matter of *paramartha*[1] also. For example, some people believe that sins are washed off by having a bath in a particular river or by pilgrimage to a certain holy place and it is generally seen that men relying on such easy prescriptions, quite openly and callously commit misdeeds because the fear of punishment for their misdeeds disappears from their hearts Their mind incites them that they should have no fears at all and should without hesitation carry on

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1 The word 'paramārtha' (परमार्थ) is a compound of two words—'parama' (परम) i e. highest and 'artha' (अर्थ) i e. object or end of life Spiritual development and the realization of one's Self or 'Ātman' and of the Supreme Being are considered to be the highest objects of man's life. Religion helps in the achievement of these objects or this 'paramārtha' and as such, religion or religious activity has often been identified with 'paramārtha'.

and enjoy life, for by spending a hundred or two hundred rupees all sins can be washed off. In the same manner some persons believe they can complete the arduous journey of *paramartha* with the help of renunciation and detachment in external matters or through alms-giving or charity, while some entertain hopes of securing the fruits of *paramartha* merely by reading or listening to books. Evidently, these activities by themselves are not wrong or improper, but to believe that the wealth of true *paramartha* could be achieved through them is wholly wrong and improper. It should be remembered that just as ignorant and wrong headed persons invented wrong methods for escaping from the hardships pertaining to *paramartha* and for achieving quickly and easily perpetual and everlasting bliss, so men of wisdom and right understanding have discovered a number of proper and right methods for the acquisition of the wealth of *paramartha.* Thus in ancient times, people had to do *Pranayama*[1] in order to succeed in *Yoga* practice and had to go to forests and mountains and render service to Sages there to acquire *Brahma Vidya*[2], but in the present times Saints, finding people generally weak and miserable and also unfit to bear the hardships of life in forests and mountains, allowed them to live in the family and taught them the *Sahaj Yoga*[3] and, instead of controlling the *vrittis*[4] of one's mind through regulated breathing, they taught that both

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1. 'Prānāyāma' is the fourth of the eight parts of the Yōga system of Patanjali It consists of 3 breath-exercises It is also done mornings and evenings as a part of daily religious activity 2 'Brahma Vidyā' is Vidyā or Knowledge which leads to the realization of Brahma or Para-Brahma, the Presiding Deities of the two topmost regions of Brahmānda In a general way, it means spiritual knowledge. 3 'Sahaj Yōga' is another name for 'Surat Śabda Yōga' taught in the Radhasoami Faith. It is called 'Sahaj' or 'Easy' Yōga because most surely it is an easy Yōga. 4 Man perceives objects of the world through his senses and the sense-perceptions are carried to the brain. He is however unable either to comprehend the sense-perceptions fully or to have their knowledge until his own mind (chitta) assumes the forms of the perceived objects The various forms which the mind thus assumes one after the other are known as vṛittis of the chitta or mind.

the breath and the *vrittis* of the mind could be brought in complete control by fixing one's attention inwards. The result is that every person, while living in the family, can now by setting aside some time both morning and evening carry out the practices (*Abhyas*) taught in this Faith, provided that he observes certain necessary conditions in regard to his diet and mode of life. They further advised that, instead of carrying on penance for hundreds of years and subjecting the body to hardships, people should develop true love for the true *Satguru* and secure His grace so that purity of mind could be easily achieved and the devotee, by performing his devotions with love and faith, could one day reach the final goal.

DISCOURSE 8

LESSON FROM A DREAM

Sometimes one sees very interesting and strange dreams, the effect of which lasts on the dreamer for days together and from which very useful lessons can often be drawn. As an example, we reproduce below the dream of a devoted brother.

"One night at about 4 o'clock in the morning, I fell asleep. I then saw a frightful jungle which neither had any green tree nor were there any animals or birds. The atmosphere was dull ond dreary all round and howling and shrieking winds were blowing throughout the entire jungle. Finding myself all alone in the jungle, I began to wonder,'What has happened and how have I come to this wilderness ? Never before could I have had any idea to come to this side ?' Thinking thus, I proceeded further on till I saw a dry river at some distance. I then turned towards the river but as I felt quite exhausted in body, I sat down on the bank of the

river resting against a big boulder and began to wonder—'After all what is all this ? How destitute am I ? Who is there to help me in this jungle ? I have neither any weapons for my defence nor any articles of food and drink. If I shout, there is not even a bird to listen to me and if I sit quietly, there is not even one living creature to see me. Am I an orphan ? Is there really nobody to help me ? My body, it is so weak that it can do nothing My mind, it is incapable of thinking or understanding anything ' In short, thoughts of despondency and weakness were passing through the brain when my eyes closed and it suddenly occurred to me that I was unnecessarily feeling so distressed and that I should remember my Supreme Father and He would surely respond. This thought had just crossed my mind when some one shouted out as to who was sitting under the tree. On hearing the call, I opened my eyes in the state of dream and saw a hoary-headed sage standing before me. His eyes shone with a peculiar lustre and his appearance was somewhat awe-inspiring. On seeing the venerable person, I got up in the dream and spoke respectfully —

'Sir, it is I who am here '

Sage—'Why did you enter my garden ?'

I —'To take some rest'.

Sage—'Did you obtain permission from anybody ?'

I —'There is none here whose permission I could have obtained. Besides, I did not come here of my own accord and I am surprised to know that you call this desert a garden.'

Sage—'Why are you so much worried ?'

I —'On account of worries.'

Sage—'Have you lost something ?'

I —'No, I have lost nothing.'

Sage—'Then, why do you worry ?'

I —'I worry because I wish to serve Merciful Radhasoami and His children but I do not see any way to success in my attempt'

Sage—'Then how are you at fault ?'

I —'Fault or no fault, but I have not succeeded in accomplishing anything.'

Sage—'Success or no success, but you have done your part of the *seva*[1]'

I —'It is no *seva* worth the name. Neither is there any decrease so far in the afflictions nor any increase in the happiness of the world.'

Sage—'What difficulties confront you ?'

I —'It is a long story. Why do you wish to listen to it ?'

Sage—'Anyway, let me hear it.'

I —'The position is this. Non-Hindus consider us Hindus and therefore avoid us. Among Hindus the *Sanatanists*[2] keep aloof from us because we have no faith in holy places and idols and *Arya Samajists*[3] defame us by calling us atheists and man-worshippers and as we do not believe in the Holy *Granth*[4] of the Sikhs as Guru, they use harsh language for us. Meat and wine hold sway in the world. Neither is there anybody eager to investigate about true *paramartha* nor is there anybody desirous of learning and performing internal practices. Some arrangements were made at Dayalbagh for the comfort of devotees but how could these prosper without money and acceptance

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1. Vide Note 2 on page 5. 2. A very large section of Hindus believe in certain set principles of Hindu religion, including caste system, superiority of Brāhmans, idol worship etc. etc. They believe that these principles have come down from very ancient times or rather have always been followed In short, they are Sanātan (ancient) and therefore all such beliefs held by them are known collectively as Sanātan Dharma. Followers of this Sanātan Dharma are known as 'Sanātanists'. 3. Followers of 'Ārya Samāj' For Ārya Samāj see Note 1 on page 4. 4. The Holy Granth is the most authoritative book of the Sikhs

of aid from outside the *Satsang* circle is forbidden Foreign trade has stifled our Indian Industries. We have got only one small college and others have got tens of colleges and universities. Nobody cares for us Then how can we carry on the work and make progress? *Satsangis* are generally poor. Even then they join in *Seva* beyond their means but our needs are innumerable and are daily increasing How are we to persuade others to believe that a man can easily obtain salvation by means of the *Surat Śabda Yoga* and by accepting the protection of Merciful Radhasoami? How are we to convince the people that if the principles of the Radhasoami Satsang are followed, all the troubles of the world can come to an end? In this world, only those persons can carry on well who blindly follow the dictates of their mind. Devotion to the Guru is termed lunacy, man-worship and selfishness. Just tell me how work can go on?'

Sage—'So you have got perturbed at this only!'

I —'There is no question of being perturbed but it is a man's duty to think of solving the difficulties confronting him.'

Sage—'Then have your worries helped you in thinking out any remedy?'

I —'I could think of one remedy only and it is that if Merciful Radhasoami is pleased to grant special help, then alone could our work go on, otherwise there is no hope to succeed.'

Sage—'Do you know that answers to many difficult problems can be had in dreams?'

I —'Yes Sir, I know that'

Sage—'Well then, you now go to sleep and you would get the answer in a dream. I now go.'

The venerable person went away and I lay down on the

ground and just after two minutes, I fell asleep. I then saw (this is a dream within dream) that it was the same barren waste and I was roaming about all alone in utter despondency. In the jungle there was no green tree, no animal, no bird; all round it was dull and dreary. All of a sudden I noticed at about a distance of two yards that a plant had sprouted out of the ground and three very beautiful tiny leaves were peeping out. I had just reached near the plant when a loud voice called out from behind 'Have the reply'." That loud voice woke me up from my sleep and I actually got up. On doing so and pondering over the last portion of the dream, I concluded that the reply had really been received, that this universe was a wilderness; that the *Kalpa Vrikṣha*[1] of *Satsang* had just sprouted. It was not right to compare it with other trees of the jungle. Merciful Radhasoami Himself was pleased to plant this tree. He Himself would protect it and nurture it; man's anxieties and worries can be of no avail. One should go on performing his duty with sincerity and wait and hope for the Lord's grace. This tender plant would grow into a stalwart tree one day.

DISCOURSE 9

REAL SPIRITUAL BENEFIT CANNOT BE HAD BY WORSHIPPING BOOKS

The whole world is worshipping books so much so that honour which is bestowed on these books was never bestowed even upon their authors but it is a matter of regret that only very few people pay any attention to the real meaning of

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1 Kalpa Vriksha is the name of a tree which, according to Hindu mythology, is believed to be in the Svarga Loka or heaven. It is said that the tree fulfils each and every desire of a person who appraoches it with his request. Here Radhasoami Satsang has been described as a Kalpa tree, for satisfaction of all legitimate desires of a devotee.

what is written in those books. There are many reasons for this. First, everybody has not the ability to understand the high spiritual ideals of the Sages of ancient times. Secondly, the subject matter of these books appears so obscure due to lapse of a long interval that it has become very difficult to find out the real teachings Thirdly, ignorant followers and enemies also have during this long period interpolated so much other material that it has become difficult for even highly intelligent men to correlate the contents of one page with those of the next. The result is that people generally satisfy their hearts by worshipping and hearing the holy books or by reading them and think that an important duty for the achievement of the object of *paramartha* has been discharged. Hence many *Brahmans* even now believe that the duty of a true *Brahman* is merely to recite *mantras*[1] (verses) and it is sinful for a *Brahman* to make an effort to understand their meaning. Similarly, the '*Hafizes*'[2] among the Muslims (who can recite the *Quran* by heart) and the '*Akhand Pathis*'[3] among the Sikhs also hold the same belief. Following the example of others, Christians in America have also got enamoured of the non-stop recitation of the Holy Bible and a body of such reciters has come into existence These people recite the whole of the Bible from the beginning to the end within 72 hours Thousands of persons collect together where the recitation is done and news is published hourly notifying how much recitation had been done. Lacs of people read the news and get satisfaction and joy. It is true that it is not bad to read holy books in any manner but it is also quite true that Sages of ancient times had not written these books merely to be read like this. The real object of those Sages in writing these books

1. Verses of the Vedas as well as mystic formulae 2. 'Hafiz' is a Muslim divine (or even any Muslim) who may have learnt the entire Holy Qurān by heart 3. 'Akhand' means 'not broken' or 'continuous'. 'Paṭh' means recitation. Therefore 'Akhand Pāth' means continuous recitation of any Holy Book. The word 'Akhand Pāthīs' refers to those Sikhs who recite the Holy Granth without stopping.

was that the thoughts and sentiments relating to *paramartha* which filled their hearts should be engendered in the hearts of posterity as well, so that devotees through proper spiritual practices may attain the high status of those Sages. For this very reason it is stressed in the Radhasoami Satsang that even though only one '*Śabda*'[1] be recited from the holy books, its meaning should be fully grasped, so that as a result of right ideas getting engrained in the heart, a devotee should take to proper practical methods and adopt proper mode of living.

We give below the meaning of one *Śabda* which, when it is once fully understood, would produce a marked change in the state of one's mind (See Prem Bilas[2] *Śabda* No 120).

समझ मोहिं आई आज गुरु बात।
निज घर है अति दूर ठिकाना। राह बिकट बल ज़ोर न गात ॥ १ ॥

Samajh mohin āī āj Guru bāt
Nij ghar hai ati dūr thikānā, Rāh bikat bal zōr na gāt 1

Translation —

I have understood the real teachings of the Guru only today. I have realized that my Original Home[3], i.e. my final goal, is situated at a very great distance, that the intervening path is extremely difficult and impassable and I have not the strength within me to enable me to traverse it and finish that long journey.

बिन गुरु प्रीती काज न सरिहै। बिन प्रीती को कमर बँधात ॥ २ ॥
Bin Guru prītī kāj na sarihai, Bin prītī kō kamar bandhāt 2

Translation —

I have also realized that true Love in the Feet of the Guru is absolutely necessary for completing this

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1 Poem 2. 'Prem Bilās' is the name of the collected poems of His Holiness Sahabji Maharaj. 3. Refers to Radhasoami region.

journey and this task cannot be completed without it, for Love alone can give strength to a man on this difficult journey

गुरु का कहना चित धर सुनिए। बात कहैं गुरु हित की छाँट ॥ ३ ॥

Guru kā kahnā chit dhar suniye, Bāt kahen Guru hit kī chhānt 3

Translation —

Besides this, I have also realized that one should listen with attention to what the Guru says and keep His instructions firmly in his heart because the Guru gives us only that advice which He considers particularly beneficial to us.

करनी से मुख कभी न फेरो। जहँ लग अपनी पार बसात ॥ ४ ॥

Karnī se mukh kabhī na pherō, Jahn lag apnī pār basāt 4

Translation —

He has commanded that we should never turn our back on performance of spiritual activities, i e. the devotional practices, viz, *Sumiran*[1] (recitation), *Dhyan*[2] (contemplation) *Bhajan*[3] (Sound practice), *seva*[4] and *Satsang*[5] and it is very desirable to engage oneself in these activities as much as possible.

करनी किए बिन बल नहिं आवे। बिन बल कैसे पन्थ चलात ॥ ५ ॥

Karnī kiye bin bal nahin āve, Bin bal kaise panth chalāt 5

Translation —

For without actual performance of spiritual practices, one cannot engender internal spiritual strength required for going over the path and without spiritual

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1 Repetition of the Holy Name 'Radhasoami' at the seat of the Spirit in the human body 2 Contemplation of the Holy Form of the Satguru at the seat of the Spirit in the human body. 3. 'Bhajan' refers to the practice of establishing contact with the spiritual sound or Anhad Śabda of higher regions. 4. Vide Note 2 on page 5. 5. Vide Note 1 on page 3.

strength, it is impossible to proceed on the path leading to the final goal.

पन्थ चले बिन घर रहे दूरी। काल करम नित करें उत्पात। ६ ॥

Panth chale bin ghar rahe dūrī, Kāl karam nit karen utpāt 6

Translation —

And without stepping forward on the path, our Original Home or the final goal would remain as distant as ever and we would continue to stay on in the region of *Kal*[1] and *Karma*[2], the result of which would be that we would have to undergo much suffering at the hands of *Kal* and *Karma*.

भाग जगे हुई सुरत सुहागिन। सतगुरु आय मिले मोहि नाथ ॥ ७ ॥

Bhāg jage huī surat[3] suhāgin, Satguru āye mile mōhin nāth 7

Translation —

The fourth point which I have realized is that through good luck my spirit has now become the beloved of the Lord as it has come under the protection of the true Satguru (who is her husband[4]).

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1. Kāl or Kāl Purusha is the name of the Presiding Deity of the topmost region of Brahmānda As the Deities of the Brahmānda and Pind are engaged in the work of creation, their influence is always exerted against the release of the spirits and therefore the action of Kāl causes grief and suffering to Jīvas. 2 It is due to various 'Karmas' or actions that a Jīva remains entangled in the world Whatever action we perform, results in some samskāras and these in their turn lead to further actions and so the cycle goes on. At the root of all actions is the Ādi Karma, the original tendency of the spirit to mix with matter which brought the spirit to this Material Region Thus as long as Karma is not destroyed, there can be no release for the spirit 3. The Hindi word 'Surat' is Sanskrit 'Svarata', 'that which is absorbed in itself.' All Saints of India have used the word 'Surat' for spirit in their writings. 4. In Bhaktī Mārga (Path of Devotion), Love for the Preceptor is indispensable. This love may be of four kinds, viz, Swami Sevaka Bhāv (as servant for master), Mitra Bhāv (as friend for friend), Pitā Putra Bhāv (as son for father) and Pati Patnī Bhāv (as wife for husband), the last one being the most intense.

अब मैं चेत करूँ नित करनी। जा में चाल चले दिन रात ॥ ८ ॥

Ab main chet karūn nit karnī, Jā men chāl chale din rāt 8

Translation —

Now I shall carefully keep myself engaged in spiritual activities daily so that my progress forward on the path of *paramartha* may continue day and night without break.

सहज सहज घट में पग धारूँ। सहस कमल त्रिकुटी सुन घाट ॥ ९ ॥

Sahaj sahaj ghat men pag dhārūn, Sahas kamal trikutī sun ghāt 9

Translation —

By degrees, I would progress internally and traverse the intermediate stages, viz, *Sahasdal-Kamal*[1], *Trikuti*[1] and *Sunn Desh*[1].

इनसे होय कर भँवरगुफा होय। सतपुर पहुँचूँ बीन बजात ॥१०॥

Inse hōye kar bhanvargufā hōye, Satpur pahunchūn bīn bajāt 10

Translation—

And thus passing through these and *Bhanvarguja* and vibrating in harmony with the sound of the *Bin*[2], my spirit would enter *Satya Loka*[3].

अलख अगम लख निज घर पाऊँ। राधास्वामी सतगुरु की निज दात ॥११॥

Alakh agam lakh nij ghar pāūn, Radhasoami Satguru kī nij dāt 11

Translation—

Then after passing through *Alakh*[3] and *Agam*[3] *Lokas*, I would reach my original Home, called *Radhasoami Dham*[4] or the Region of Merciful Radhasoami, through the special grace and favour of Merciful Radhasoami who is the true *Satguru*

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1 Spheres of Brahmānda 2 To a devotee who performs spiritual practices the sound resembling the sound of the Bīn on this earth becomes audible in Satya Loka 3. Spheres of the Pure Spritual Region. 4 'Dhām' means Region.

DISCOURSE 10

A LIVING SATGURU IS A NECESSITY UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

Some people hesitate to join the Radhasoami Faith because they think it is a sin to take the protection of another Guru as they have already accepted one. They feel that as it is incumbent on every woman to remain true to one husband, it is likewise incumbent on every devotee following the *Bhakti Marga*[1] to seek the protection of only one Guru and it is surprising that even well-educated people are victims of this illusion. The reason is that many people have only a blind conception about Guru. Their belief is that their spiritual duty is discharged merely by accepting any *Sadhu*[2], *Faqir* or a famous *Brahman*[3] as Guru and making cash offerings to him and they become entitled to the benefit which can accrue to a person who has taken the protection of the Guru. It should be clearly understood that these notions are wholly erroneous and they bring bad name to the *Bhakti Marga* The word 'Guru' refers to a person who creates light in darkness. Hence that Great Personality alone Who is resplendent in Himself deserves to be given Guru's status and as the object of true religion is the attainment of salvation or realization of the true Supreme Being, naturally therefore in *paramartha* only that Person who leads a *Jiva* in His own light to the August Presence of the true Supreme Being can be recognized as true Guru. Now if an individual has accepted an ordinary *Sadhu* or *Brahman* as a Guru, his action is simply useless, because that helpless fellow, being at the mercy of his own mind and senses, is himself in darkness and cannot be expected to show light to his disciple. And as he is not entitled to the Guru's status, a man's establishing connection with him is just like marrying a

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1. Path of Devotion. Also see Note 1 on page 3 2. An ordinary mendicant. 3. Name of the highest caste among Hindus.

woman to a block of wood. At the time of marriage the bridegroom wears clothes which go through ceremonial rounds[1] along with the bridegroom himself but nobody says that the bride has been married to the clothes also, because the clothes are inanimate. In the same manner, if an individual has through ignorance accepted as his Guru a person who is not entitled to Guru's status,the former's chastity and fidelity to Guru would not suffer in the least if subsequently on meeting a true Guru, he takes His protection. It is correct that if a person meets a true and perfect Guru, he should not accept as Guru any other person he may come across after that and it is also true that until one meets a perfect Guru one should not accept any person as a Guru, but this also is correct that if one meets an imperfect Guru at first and then subsequently happens to meet a perfect Guru, he should at once give up the imperfect Guru and take the protection of the perfect Guru. If one meets a perfect Guru but the latter departs from the world and the object of the devotee remains unfulfilled, that is, the goal for the achievement of which he had taken the protection of the Guru has not been achieved, then it is incumbent upon him that on meeting a perfect Guru later on, he should at once seek His protection and should not differentiate between his past and the present Guru in any manner, because these Great Souls differ only in the appearance of their physical body, the real essence and status being identical. Some biased persons obstinately refuse to have faith in the *Satguru* nominated by the departed *Satguru* and continue their spiritual practices by contemplating on the Form of the departed *Satguru*. Of course, they do not suffer any loss in *paramartha* through this behaviour of theirs, but their present life is wasted from the point of view of *paramartha*, because they are not able to make any further internal progress in *paramartha*. It is a cardinal principle in the Religion of

1. In Hindu marriage, the bride and the bridegroom go round the sacred fire seven times to complete the ceremony of marriage.

Saints that one cannot progress internally without the protection of the living *Satguru*. Hence, it is advisable for every follower of the Religion of Saints that he should put aside all obstinacy and bias and accept the protection of the living *Satguru*. Of course, it is necessary that the devotee must fully satisfy himself whether a person is really a true Guru or not before accepting his discipleship.

DISCOURSE 11

IT IS SHEER FOLLY NOT TO APPRECIATE THE SUPERIOR STATUS OF LIVING ADEPTS

The way worldly people behave is quite strange. Millions of people have firm faith in Rama, Krishna, Mohammed, Christ, Nanak and Kabir and are ready to sacrifice their body, mind and wealth in their name but they take it ill if any living Adept who does not belong to their circle of known persons is mentioned to them. They very readily believe thousands of things said against common sense and reason about Rama, Krishna and others but if they are told even something quite sensible about this living Adept, hundreds of doubts and various queries crop up in their minds The fun of it is that, in the age when Rama, Krishna and others were living, similar doubts and queries filled the minds of the people about them as well What then is the cause of it? The only cause of all this is sheer folly, bias, egotism and bad luck of the people. These people do not know what real greatness there was in Rama, Krishna, Mohammed, Christ and others, nor do they know the law under which these Great Personalities made their advent in this world. They have got absolutely no interest in investigations regarding *paramartha*. They concern themselves only with the names of those Great Souls. They are so proud of their being well-informed and all-knowing that listening to

and appreciating other peoples' opinions which may differ even slightly from their own views is to them like drinking a cup of bitter poison. These people remain deprived of the real blessing of man's life though they have and also profess faith in the Great Personalities and Sages of the past and are always talking about and praising their teachings. It is therefore a matter for consideration whether there can be any greater misfortune for any man.

The Theosophical Society[1] has announced that some great incarnation is about to make His advent and the whole world should be ready to welcome Him. More than one member of the Society sent information to its Head-quarters about the advent of Merciful Radhasoami and desired that the Theosophical Society should pay attention to this event as well, as every activity of the *Satsang* appeared to be graceful and extraordinary but only a curt reply was received. Obviously, why should anybody investigate about an Adept for whom he has no partisan leanings in his heart ! It should however be clearly understood that true Incarnations do not stand in need of the assistance of any individual or Society. Proclamation of the Command of the Deity or the *Mauj*[1] (Will) under which the Incarnation makes His advent goes automatically to the Agents of Providence in the creation below and all the Forces of Nature work jointly and to the best of their capacity for the successful completion of His mission. If some individuals take no notice of Him or even oppose Him, this act or attitude of theirs does not produce even the slightest effect

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1 The name of the Society founded by Madame H P. Blavatsky, in 1875 Its greatest leader in India was Mrs Annie Besant. The Headquarters of the Society are at Adyar (Madras). 2 Any, even the least, commotion on the spiritual plane, which results in activity on the spiritual plane or even on the mental and physical planes is called 'Mauj'. Literally, the word means 'wave' of the sea As Incarnations and Saints etc. also act from the spiritual plane, the term 'Mauj' is applied in their case as well.

on His *Mauj* (Will). A spiritual force from higher regions does not at all stand in need of the help of insignificant human beings. It is quite capable in itself of accomplishing its mission. It is possible that with some specific purpose He might be born or brought up in the family of a carpenter[1], a shepherd[2], an Ahir[3] or a weaver[4] and thus appear to have been placed in an outwardly helpless condition but this does not affect His innate and internal capability in the least, nor do the Forces of Nature raise their heads against Him.

DISCOURSE 12

MAN'S CONNECTION WITH RELIGION SHOULD BE PRACTICAL

There are so many religions prevalent in the world in this age as there have never been before. Some persons, taking their number into consideration think that, compared with the past, there has been a large increase in the numbr of persons now seeking *paramartha*[5] and that zeal for religion is at its height, but in reality want of faith in and apathy towards religion as are apparent now-a-days were never observed before It is no doubt true that a large number of people orally declare their adherence to religion and talk about many intricacies of religion but sincere interest in investigation in matters of *paramartha* is noticed in a few people only. That person alone who follows and acts according to the teachings of a particular religion in practical life deserves to be called the follower of that religion Just as mentioning only the names of sweets and medicines cannot satisfy the hunger of a man nor eradicate his disease, in like manner, mere talking about the teachings of a religion cannot

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1 Reference is to Lord Christ 2. Refers to Prophet Mohammed 3 Refers to Lord Krishna 4. Refers to Kabir Sahab, the Great Saint of India. 5. Vide Note 1 on page 23.

bestow any spiritual benefit. It should be clear that these mental frailties of man are mentioned here only with the intention of drawing a lesson therefrom for the benefit of the people at large. Hence, with this end in view, it is proposed to give the examples of various kinds of people and to show that the mind of man really keeps only a very superficial connection with his religion although outwardly it professes attachment for it and thereafter to explain what kind of connection every *Satsangi* is expected to have with the Radhasoami Faith.

Some individuals often read the books of the religion they profess and also talk about its teachings and sing the praises of and express their appreciation of the greatness of its Founder and other Venerable Leaders but in practice they do not act upon any of the teachings of that religion. In reality, they treat religion as a toy and please themselves by playing with it just as it pleases them.

Some individuals worship and offer devotion to some Deity and repeat His *mantra*[1] one lac times or so in a day, but they do all this for the fulfilment of some wish or worldly desire of theirs. In fact, these persons treat religion as one treats his servant

Some individuals perform various religious ceremonies with sufficient zeal and devotion according to the custom and usage of their family and as they have sufficient income and also children in their family and command enough respect in the public also, they believe that all these blessings have been received by them on account of their following the usual religious customs of the family and they further hope that by continuing to observe the usages, these blessings would be available during their whole life and would even increase. These persons consider religion akin to their mother and as

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1. The Holy Name of the Deity or some mystic formula pertaining to the Deity.

the child obtains toys and money etc by treating her with great respect, in like manner these persons also hope to receive from religion all the good things of the world which would provide them comfort and enjoyment

Some individuals increase their knowledge by studying the teachings and philosophy of their religion They ponder over the thoughts of and inferences drawn by the Venerable Leaders of their religion and formulate their ideas about the duties of man, existence of *Atma* and *Paramatma* and the problems of birth, death and salvation. These persons take from their religion the work of an able teacher or philosopher

It should be clearly understood that all such notions are very trivial from the point of view of a true follower of the Religion of Saints. It is incumbent upon a follower of the Religion of Saints to have, as a moth has for the lamp, an ardent desire for the vision of the Supreme Being. Just as a moth is filled with joy only when it sees a flame, so nothing else than the vision of the true Supreme Being should give joy to a true follower of the Religion of Saints. It is obvious that these qualities of a moth cannot be developed within the heart and mind of an individual merely by reading books or hearing lectures. True *Satsang* and correct discrimination (*Viveka*[1]) are essential for this. True *Satsang* and correct discrimination can be acquired only by attendance at the feet of Holy Persons[2] and it is only the grace of the True Supreme Being which enables one to get opportunities of associating with Holy Persons. And the grace of the True Supreme Being is obtained through repeated and earnest

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1 'Viveka' means ability of separating the invisible spirit from the visible world and its objects or spirit from matter, truth from untruth and reality from mere semblance or illusion 2 The Hindi word is सत् पुरुष (Sat Purusha) i e. True Being Here the expression refers to Persons of highly-developed spirituality. Sādhs and Saints are therefore Sat Purushas.

prayers from the depth of one's heart, the merciful glances of Holy Persons, or through selfless service of destitute and distressed persons. Strong desire to offer sincere prayers, to obtain merciful glances of Holy Persons and to serve the poor and the destitute arises as a result of taking *Śatoguni*[1] food and living a life of piety. Birth in a good family and good *samskaras*[2] of past lives provide the opportunity for the last-named things and one gets good *samskaras* only if his intellect is clear and pure.

One might therefore say that it becomes an extremely difficult matter and an infinitely lengthy process to develop true love for the Supreme Being or in other words, to become a follower of the Religion of Saints in its true sense. Obviously, it is really so but it is not so difficult for a person having a pure intellect, for if such a person accepts with determination the protection of a true *Sadh* or Saint, he can easily become the recipient of good *samskaras*, righteous living, eagerness for properly offering earnest prayers and the grace of the True Supreme Being as gifts from the *Sadh* or Saint and he can thus attain the high status of a true devotee very soon.

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1. The three gunas, viz, sattva (सत्व), rajas (रजस्) & tamas (तमस्), apart from their functions in the creation, represent the three moods of man's ego. Sattva guna or Satōgun, as popularly known in Hindi, means the state of equilibrium or goodness-mood or mood of righteousness Hence 'Satōgunī', that which is helpful in bringing about the above state or mood. 2. Samskāras are impressions or conformations which operate to bring about re-birth and which control the actions of living men. In the pre-creational condition an infinite number of spirit-entities had the tendency to mix with matter and this circumstance was the first Samskāra to bring about the descent of spirit-entities to the material regions.

DISCOURSE 13

WHAT IS MEANT BY DISINTERESTED KARMAS

People speak very highly of *Nishkama karma*, i e. disinterested action in the world. Very great stress has been laid in the *Bhagwad Gita*[1] and many other *Śastras* of the Hindus on the necessity of performing disinterested acts and it has also been stated that a person easily gets salvation if his acts are disinterested People, however, interpret this differently, each in his own way. For example, it is ordinarily understood that it would be disinterested action if you perform an act for promoting the happiness of others without entertaining any desire in your mind for your own pleasure and comfort. Some people however say that if one follows one's religion or performs his duties without hoping for happiness or pleasure in this world or in the next, it would be a disinterested action. Some think that it would be a disinterested act if one blindly continues to observe the customs and usages of the family. But some others say that it is absolutely impossible for a human being to perform disinterested action because when you see a man in distress and try to remove his trouble, even though it is true that apparently you make him happy, yet while trying to serve him, you are moved by the desire to remove his distress and you get a special kind of pleasure also on removing his trouble and it is not impossible that your mind might be creating this desire to remove another's distress only to enjoy that special kind of pleasure. Naturally therefore your effort cannot be disinterested.

As regards daily observance of religious rites and the

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1 In Bhagwad Gītā, Lord Krishna has emphasized the great importance and value of disinterested and unselfish action. As people do not generally understand the real significance of the principle of disinterested action, various confusing ideas are prevalent.

performance of duties, you would find that the desire to perform your duties with care so that you may not fall from your *Dharma* persists also at the time of the performance of your duties. If a person is extremely desirous of performing disinterested action, then in that case the desire that he should remain disinterested must be present in him at the time of performing all his acts, lest any action of his should be construed as having been prompted by some desire. It is clear that this or other similar objections should not be dismissed off-hand, for a man will not be prepared to engage in action without some desire or motive. For after all, why should a man make any effort, why should he give up his comfort and tire his bones and why should he direct his attention in any special direction? There must be some purpose or object for which one may act. Undoubtedly, a person who acts without any purpose is a lunatic, because only men devoid of intellect act without any aim But if the above considerations are correct, why and how shall a person perform disinterested acts and how can his actions bring about salvation? If the acts of lunatics are to be taken as disinterested acts, the lunatics should have the strongest claim to salvation (*Moksha*). But it is not so The word '*Nishkama*[1]' does not mean 'free from every kind of desire'. Some holy persons suggest that acts should be dedicated to God and some advise that they should be done with a view to gain the grace and pleasure of their Deity or God (*Ishtdeva*). The Radhasoami Faith teaches that a true devotee should perform all his acts with a view to obtain direct *darśana*[2] or vision of the true Supreme Being. If this desire is kept in mind, performance of all one's duties becomes a disinterested act. The desire for the vision of the true Supreme Being is not

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1. The word 'Nishkāma' (निष्काम) is made up of निष् (Nish) काम (Kāma) 'Nish' means 'without'. 'Kāma' means 'Kāmanā' (कामना) i e. desire 'Nishkāma' thus means 'without any desire' 2. Direct darśana implies darśana without the aid of any media i.e. the Spirit which is itself in a pure form obtains direct perception.

called 'desire'. It is termed 'Love'. Only *Jivanmukta*[1] persons i. e persons who have attained salvation or freedom in their life-time from life and death can be free from desires of every kind. Ordinary *Jivas* can at the most subordinate the desires they have for pleasures of mind and body. They will therefore have to keep in their heart the desire for their spiritual progress till such time that all the knots[2] of their heart unloosen and they realize the true Supreme Being. With knots still subsisting in the heart, thought of getting free from desires of all kinds would lead an individual towards laziness or mischief. You should therefore beware of this pitfall.

DISCOURSE 14

IT IS DESIRABLE TO KEEP THE MIND UNDER CONTROL EVEN AT TIMES OTEHR THAN THOSE FIXED FOR INTERNAL PRACTICE

Just as a little negligence spoils the best of foods and a little carelessness turns the oldest friend into an enemy, in like manner a little carelessness or want of caution turns even the best possible condition of one's mind into an undesirable condition. The earnest devotee has then to make effort once again to remove the defect and to restore the mind to its former condition. Thus many *Satsangis* have to face this difficulty and as they do not know the real cause, they have to experience ups and downs again and again. No

1. 'Jīvanmukta' is made up of 'jīvat' and 'mukta' 'Jīvat' is participle of the Sanskrit verb जिव् (jiv), 'to live' i e living, i e living in physical body Thus 'Jīvanmukta' refers to a person who has attained salvation while still living and in his physical body. 2 'Surat' or 'Ātman' or spirit of every living being has tied itself down to matter. This tie or knot of Ātman with matter is known as 'granthi' or knot Mundaka Upanishad also refers to this 'granthi' in verse 8 of chapter 2. Salvation can be achieved only when this knot is untied

doubt, they have a real desire for *paramartha*, but they do not feel any responsibility in respect of controlling their minds in the belief that the *Satguru* would protect them and so, except at the time of internal practices, they leave their minds quite unrestrained to act freely as they like. It is admitted that from a worldly point of view these *Satsangis* lead very good and pious lives as compared to others and as such none dare find fault with their conduct and bearing but the standard of the world for discrimination between good and bad is much lower compared to that applied in the case of those who practise *Yoga*. Hence a good many things, which according to the customs of the society and the laws of the land are perfectly legitimate and correct, stand condemned and are considered improper when looked at from the point of view of *paramartha*. For example, deep attachment for one's wealth and prestige are generally considered to be quite legitimate and desirable but for one devoted to *Yoga* practice, it is necessary to keep himself unconcerned about such things because without true detachment, the restlessness and impurities of the mind can never be removed and as long as this is not done, it would be impossible to concentrate attention within and get any pleasure in *Dhyan* (Contemplation of the Holy Form) and in the sound practice. Hence it is imperative that all *Satsangis* should keep proper watch over their minds even at times when they are not engaged in internal practices They should once for all understand that after violent indulgence in passion, anger, etc. the mind keeps on rushing in that direction for a long time just as a taut wire, when once violently shaken, keeps on vibrating for a long time. Besides, it should also be remembered that the mind gets out of control if one applies himself for long to any work and again and again returns to it and thinks about it again and again even after the work is finished, so that even on sleeping continuously for four or five hours, the spirit force gets so much dissipated that on waking up, the condition existing prior

to sleep cannot be restored without special efforts. The long and short of it all is that an earnest devotee should not indulge violently in any lower propensities of the mind nor should he devote his attention to any work or object continuously for long hours at a stretch.

Some people would contend that so long as one has to stay in the world and performance of worldly duties is his responsibility, violent indulgence in passion, anger, etc. or continuous engagement in worldly matters is unavoidable and quite usual for man. Such statements appear to be correct and obviously it is very difficult to avoid these obstacles but, as the *Satsangis* have already been directed, if any person, while in wakeful condition, practises *Sumiran* and *Dhyan* for a couple of minutes after every half hour or so and also when going to sleep, that is, he should go to sleep while engaged in *Sumiran* and *Dhyan*, and if before sleeping he tells his mind once or twice that he should not sleep for more that two hours, he can easily get rid of both these obstacles and maintain a condition of internal bliss and concentration at all times A trial should be given to this suggestion for a few days and then you would see what great benefit you have derived by acting on it.

काटते और खोदते रस्ता रहो,
मरते दम तक एक दम गाफिल न हो।

Kātate aur khōdate rastā rahō,
Marte dam tak ek dam ghāfil na hō

Translation —

Keep on cutting and digging your path,
Do not be negligent even for a second all your life.

DISCOURSE 15

CORRECT METHOD OF SUMIRAN (REPETITION OF THE HOLY NAME)

जिन्ही नाम धियाइया गये मुश्क़्कत घाल ।
नानक ते मुख उज्जले केती छूटे नाल ॥

Jinhīn nām dhiyāiyā gaye mushaqqat ghāl
Nānak te mukh ujjale ketī chhūte nāl

Translation —

The pangs of birth and death of those who repeat the Holy Name come to an end for ever. Guru Nanak[1] says that they are crowned with glory and countless others also receive their liberation through them.

The above mentioned couplet of Guru Nanak appears in the Holy *Granth*[2]. It means that the persons who repeat the Holy Name end their travail, i.e the trouble involved in birth and death and their faces become resplendent and many others also become free from birth and death through them. These words of Guru Nanak are worth writing in letters of gold, because the practice advised in the above couplet is the cardinal principle of the Religion of Saints and is the backbone of many other religions. Acting on this principle, Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims and Christians and others daily repeat the Holy Name of their Deity or read the holy books of their religion but it has to be stated with regret that many brothers

1 The Founder of Sikh Religion He lived from 1469 A D to 1540 A.D His teachings are similar to those of the Radhasoami Faith.
2. The Holy Granth is the most authoritative book of the Sikh religion. It contains compositions of the ten Gurus of Sikh religion and also of some other Saints. It is in Gurumukhī language. It was a cardinal principle of Sikh religion that there must be a living Guru As there has been no Guru after the tenth, the Sikhs believe that the Holy Granth is their Guru since then.

are entirely ignorant of the correct method of repeating the Name. These helpless people make every effort on their part, that is, they get up early, have their bath or wash their hands and feet and counting the beads of the rosary repeat the holy name a thousand or a lac of times or regularly study their holy books intelligently and in doing so they get a good deal of satisfaction and peace also, but as none of the above activities is the correct method of *Sumiran* i e the Repetition of the Holy Name, these people do not get the real benefit out of their practice. Sheikh Farid-ud-Din Attār[1] says—

یاد حق آمد غذا این روح را　　مرهم آمد این دل مجروح را
مومنان ذکر خدا بسیار گوئے　　تا بیابی در دو عالم آب روئے
ذکر بر سه وجه باشد بے خلاف　　تو ندانی این سخن را از گزاف
آم را نه بود بجز ذکر زبان　　ذکر خاصان باشد از دل بے گمان
ذکر خاص الخاص ذکر سر بود　　هر که ذاکر نیست او خاسر شود

Yāde Haq āmad ghizā īn rūh rā　marham āmad īn dile majrūh rā
Mominān zikr-i-khudā bisiyār gōye　tā ba yābī dar dō ālam abrūye
Zikr bar seh vajah bāshad be khilāf　tū na dānī īn sakhun rā az gazāf
Ām rā na buvad bajuz zikr-i-zabān　zikr-i-khāsān bāshad az dil be gumān
Zikr khās-ul khās zikr-i-sirr buvad　harki zākir nest ō khāsir shavad

Translation—

The repetition of the Name of the Supreme Being serves as food for the spirit and acts like a balm for a wounded heart O devotee, repeat the name of the Lord properly so that you may get esteem in both the worlds Without doubt there are three methods of Sumiran (i.e. Repetition of the Holy Name) but you take it as a joke and are therefore ignorant of this secret. Ordinary people repeat the Name with their tongue; this is the first method. Some selected persons

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1 Khwaja Farīd-ud-Dīn Attār was a famous Sufi mystic of Persia He was born at Nishapur in 1116 A D. and lived there upto the age of 114 years when he was killed by a Moghul in 1229 A D. By profession he was a physician and druggist.

undoubtedly repeat the Name within their heart; this is the second method But a chosen few, i.e. some rare devotees, repeat the Name according to some secret method ; this is the third method. Those who do not repeat the Name come to grief

From this it is evident that Sheikh Sahab knew very well that over and above the methods of repetition with the tongue or the heart, there is another secret method for repetition of the Name. According to the Religion of Saints, this method is called Repetition of the Name with the tongue of the spirit or soul When any person joins the Radhasoami Faith, this third method of Repetition of the Holy Name is properly explained to him and he is told that though it is not bad to repeat the Holy Name with the tongue or the heart, real spiritual benefit is gained only when repetition is done with the tongue of the spirit Ordinary persons do not know where the seat of their spirit is located inside their bodies, though they know full well that in nature all the forces or forms of energy spread out from some centre within the sphere of their activity. According to this rule, there must be some such centre in every human body from which the currents of the spirit force emerge and spread out to the different parts of the body. The Repetition of the Name with the tongue of the spirit is done at the seat of the spirit In the beginning the devotee finds this practice to be very difficult because his attention current is drawn again and again towards the physical tongue and the heart but after a struggle for a month or so, it begins to appear to him to be easy and the joy and bliss which the devotee then feels is beyond description. The method of Repetition of the Name with the physical tongue which is called in Persian as "Zikr-ul-Lassān" is the least efficacious practice. Kabir Sahab says about it:—

माला तो कर में फिरे जिभ्या मुख के माहि।
मनुआँ तो दह दिस फिरे यह तो सुमिरन नाहिं॥

Mālā tō kar men phire jibhyā mukh ke māhin,
Manuān tō dah dis phire yeh tō sumiran nāhin.

Translation —

The rosary moves about in your hand and your tongue moves inside your mouth but your mind roams about in all the ten directions. This is not the correct method of Repetition of the Name.

Repetition of the Name by the heart is much better than the repetition by the tongue but the effect that this practice produces is limited to the heart alone, i.e. the heart becomes pure to a certain extent. That true benefit which Guru Nanak has mentioned[1] is a different thing altogether. That benefit can be achieved only when an individual has control over his "*Prana*"[2]. "*Prana*" does not refer to the in-coming and out-going air connected with the function of breathing but it refers to that power which makes the lungs and other organs of the body function. This power exists and functions in everybody but is uncontrolled Control on it can be established by means of concentration of attention Thus it is evident that as long as the hands, tongue and the heart of the devotee engaged in *Sumiran* do not become quiescent, the devotee will not be able to achieve concentration of attention and till then his *Sumiran* would only be either repetition by the tongue or by the heart.

It is stated at one place in the *Brahmanda Purana*[3]

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1 In the couplet quoted in the beginning of this Discourse.
2 The Śakti or vital power (or vital airs) which keeps a man alive. Generally Pranas (vital airs) are considered to be five (Prāna, apāna, vyāna, udāna, samāna). These function in different parts of the body.
3. Literally, the word 'Purāna' means 'ancient' and therefore it also means old history The Purānas are a part of the religious literature of the Hindus and are believed to deal with five topics, viz, creation of universe, its dissolution and renovation, genealogy of gods, reigns of Manus and history of solar and lunar races of Kshatriyas This Purāna is so called because it was revealed by Brahmā and contains an account of the Brahmāṇḍa.

that everybody is a *Śudra*[1] from his birth, he becomes a *Dvija*[2] on investiture with the sacred thread and becomes a *Vipra*[3] after reading the Vedas and he becomes a Brahman after knowing *Brahma*. From this it is evident that though a study of the Vedas and Sāstras is useful and good but it gives the status of a *Vipra* only and that the status of a Brahman can be got only after the realization of *Brahma*. In other words, it is one thing to read the Sāstras and quite another to realize the *Brahma*.

Similarly, it is stated in Chhandogya Upanishad that Sage Nārada[4] came to Sage Sanatkumara[5] and said to him "O Bhagwan, teach me something". Sanatkumara replied, "Tell me what you already know and then I would teach you something beyond it" Nārada said, "I have read Rig-Veda[6], also Yajur-Veda[7], Sāma-Veda[8] and the Atharva-Veda[9], history and the Purānas[10], the Veda of Vedas[11] i.e.

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1. The lowest of the four original castes of Hindus. Śudras served the three higher castes. 2 'Dvija' means 'twice-born' A man of any one of the three higher classes, as they were considered to be born a second time when invested with the sacred thread. 3 The word Vipra (विप्र) is commonly taken to mean a Brāhmana, particularly one who has studied the Vedas and is acquainted with priest-craft The word is derived from Sanskrit verb 'विप्' (vip) which means 'to stir'. 'Vipra' thus means one who is stirred within or inspired The origin of the word shows that it must have been used for a man of higher spiritual status in the beginning though not so later on 4 A Ṛishi, believed to be a son of Brahmā and generally spoken of as messenger between gods and men in Hindu mythology. 5. A son of Brahmā who is believed to have possessed eternal youth. 6. The most ancient book of Hindus It contains 1017 hymns in 8 chapters 7. The sacrificial Veda, containing many mantras of Ṛig-Veda with prose formulae for sacrifices 8 One of the three principal Vedas. Most of the mantras are of Rig-Veda but arranged for purposes of chanting in different manner 9. The last of the Vedas It contains spells, charms etc and is also more philosophical in places. 10. Vide Note 3 on page 51 11. Grammar has been named as the Veda of the Vedas, because it is through knowledge of grammar that the Vedas could be properly understood.

grammar, Pitri Vidyā[1], Rāsi Vidyā[2], Daiva Vidyā[3], Nidhi Vidyā[4], Vākovākya Vidyā[5], Ekāyana Vidyā[6], Deva Vidyā[7], Brahma Vidyā.[8], Bhūta Vidyā[9], Kshatra Vidyā[10], Nakshatra Vidyā[11], Sarpa Vidyā[12] and Devajana Vidyā[13]. I have read all these, but Lord, I only know *mantras* and not the Ātmā (spirit) O Lord, I have heard from Great Personalities like you that one who knows Ātmā, reaches beyond the domain of sorrow and pain. I am now in such a pain. Kindly take me, who am in distress, beyond the region of pain and distress.

Hearing this, *Sanatkumara* said, 'All that you have read is words only, it is not the reality or the spirit (*Atma*) *Rig*, *Yajur*, *Sama* etc. are all mere words. You may continue to worship the words but the influence of one who worships words is limited to the sphere to which the words relate'. *Narada* was astonished at this and enquired :—

'O Lord ! is there any thing superior to words ?'

Ans —'Yes, there are things superior to words.'

Q —'Tell me about them.'

Ans.—' '*Vani*' (speech) is superior to words as it is speech which explains the words fully It is the speech which interprets *Rig-Veda* etc.'

Q —'Is there any thing superior to speech ?'

Ans —'Yes, mind is superior to speech etc. etc.'

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1. Knowledge about the manes. 2 Knowledge of the 12 Rāśis or Zodiacal divisions and their significance 3. Knowledge of portents etc having their effect on man's life 4. Science of finding out treasures and hoards or Science of chronology. 5. Science of questions and answers 6. Science of fixing one's attention only on one single object. 7 Divine knowledge 8 Vide Note 2 on page 24. 9 Demonology, knowledge of evil beings 10 Military Science 11. Astronomy 12 Knowledge of snakes and snake-charming 13. Knowledge of gods, demons and serpents.

Continuing the series in this way, *Sanatkumara* said that *Sankalpa* (will) was superior to mind and thereafter he mentioned *Chitta* (attention), then *Dhyan* (contemplation), then *Vijnana* (knowledge[1]), then *Bala* (strength). then *Anna* (food), then *Jala* (water), then *Teja* (fire), then *Akaśa* (ether), then *Smriti* (memory), then *Aśa* (hope), then *Prana*[2], each superior to the preceding one. Explaining the importance of each, *Sanatkumara* told him that he would obtain free access to the region pertaining to any of the above which he worshipped.

But in regard to *Prana* he said that *Prana* was everything, that *Prana* was mother, father and everything, movable and immovable, and whoever thus sees, believes and understands *Prana* to be everything, becomes an *Ativadi* (discoverer). *Ativadi*[3] is that person who discovers something not previously known to others

It is evident from this story that *Rishis* very well understood the importance of *Prana* or the spirit force (*Atma Śakti*) which is beyond the reach of the physical tongue and the heart and they taught that without awakening this *Śakti* i e. the Spirit force no human being could escape the cycle of pain and pleasure and birth and death. The same thing was taught by Guru Nanak and other Saints and *faqirs* and the same is being taught in the Radhasoami Faith. The practice of *Sumiran* taught in the Radhasoami Faith leads to the awakening of this *Śakti* The repetition of *mantras* or the Holy Names by the tongue or by the mind is no doubt very beneficial to a certain extent, but it cannot bestow true spiritual benefit

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1 So far the series had enumerated things finer and subtler than the preceding one, but hereafter it comes down to more material things and then again rises up to subtle things 2 'Prāna' here refers to the spirit force. 3. One who speaks about what is beyond everything else.

DISCOURSE 16

CORRECT METHOD OF CONTEMPLATION

The statements of some Great Personalities were cited in Discourse 15 and an attempt was made to show that the methods of *Sumiran* adopted by ordinary people cannot bestow true spiritual benefit and Repetition of the Holy Name should be done by the tongue of the spirit if true spiritual benefit is to be obtained. We would now try to explain that serious misconceptions about Contemplation (*Dhyan*) also are prevalent among the common people, as in the case of *Sumiran*. Many persons think that bowing to an idol or a photograph with eyes closed and submitting their troubles or offering their thanks for benefits received is *Dhyan* (Contemplation). Some people offer garlands, flowers or money to any idol, photograph, old relic or at some holy place, sit quietly for some time and contemplate the form of the idol or photograph in their mind Some others try to visualise the Omnipresent God by closing their eyes and contemplating the formless God, all-pervading like the ether, luminous like the sun or flame of light, merciful, kind and omnipotent. Some devotees fix their gaze on some idol or photograph and sit at a stretch for an hour or so. There are others who contemplate the white or five-coloured light at the lower end of the spinal cord. Some men of strong conviction contemplate the form of Krishna or Mahatma Buddha at the navel and some try to concentrate their attention by looking fixedly at the tip of their nose. In short, different earnest devotees contemplate their Deity (*Isht Deva*) or some object in different ways according to their own light and often succeed therein and gain supernatural powers, happiness, peace or internal experiences. No doubt, concentration of attention internally by some method and for any reason is a praiseworthy act and a beneficial practice as compared to spending away life only in eating, drinking and merry-making. It should

however be understood that the practice of *Dhyan* (Contemplation) by the proper method bestows on man spiritual benefit of a very high order.

Tulsidas states about the worship of a picture or an idol as below :—

कल्प वृक्ष को चित्र लिखि, कीन्हें विनय हजार ।
बित्त न पावे ताहि सों, तुलसी देख विचार ।

Kalp vriksh kō chitra likhi, kīnhe vinaya hazār,
Bitt na pāwe tāhi sōn, Tulsi dekh bichār

Translation —

O Tulsi, if somebody paints the *Kalpa-vrikṣha* and offers a thousand prayers to it, he cannot get anything from it. This should be carefully considered.

The reason for this disappointment needs no explanation. A picture of the Kalpa tree cannot serve the purpose of the real Kalpa tree. Hence a person who wants to gain his desired objects, must seek the real Kalpa tree and submit his desires to it. No doubt the contemplation of a picture or of an idol considerably helps in securing concentration of attention and in directing the mind towards the Deity but it is absolutely wrong to hope that the picture or the idol can, like the Deity, fulfil all the desires of the devotee.

Sage Patanjali has thrown sufficient light on the subject of contemplation, for *Dhyan* is a necessary part of the *Yoga Sadhana*, which he propounded. Hence, in one of his *Sutras* he says :—

वीतरागविषयम् वा चित्तम्

"Vītarāga vishayam vā chittam"

Translation —

Contemplation of the Form of Persons who are free from attachment for the world and its objects puts an end to the distraction of attention.

After that he says :—

यथाभिमत ध्यानाद्वा

"Yathābhimata dhyānādavā"

Translation —

Contemplation of the Form of the Person whom one loves, also helps in the concentration of attention.

It is evident from this that practice of contemplation makes the mind quiet and enables the devotee to move forward in his spiritual practices and if anybody contemplates any idol of a Deity or the photograph of a holy person with this end in view, his action is perfectly correct. He would certainly attain success in removing the obstacles of the mind through this practice It is also evident from this that this practice of his cannot be construed as worship of the idol or the photograph. Hence it is that in the Radhasoami Faith the relics and the photographs of the Leaders of the Faith are respected but no sensible Satsangi offers any prayers to them nor is this permitted The photographs come in useful only for helping in the concentration of the mind because the Great Personalities whose photographs they are were not only free from worldly attachments but Satsangis also love them intensely.

In regard to this, some persons can pose the question why should they not contemplate the formless, all-pervading God and why should they contemplate inanimate objects. The reply is that it is one thing to raise an objection in regard to any matter and it is quite another thing to decide after actual experience. If by contemplating the all-pervading, formless God any person can acquire concentration of his mind and ability to enter the state of *Samadhi*[1] thereafter,

1. 'Samādhi is the name given to the highest stage of Yōga by Patanjali It is the state of absolute quiescence of mind, i e when all physical and mental activity is suspended.

he need not contemplate any idol or photograph at all, but it is extremely difficult for ordinary persons to practise contemplation of the all pervading and formless God. Hence Lord Krishna has stated in the *Gita* that one has to face great difficulties in contemplating the Invisible, while a visible form can be easily contemplated. But as has been just stated, if any person can actually (i e. not merely to raise an objection) secure his heart's objective by contemplating the Invisible, he does not stand in need of acting according to the teachings of the Radhasoami Faith nor on the advice of Sage Patanjali. The practice of contemplation is only an intermediate step for achieving the *Samadhi* state and a devotee can easily climb that step by contemplating some visible form but if somebody can climb that step by some other method, there is no harm The only thing that matters is that one should climb the step and proceed forward.

Another matter to be considered now is about the centre in the human body where contemplation should be done. In the Religion of Saints, i.e. in the Radhasoami Faith, contemplation is done at the same point where *Sumiran* is done, because when attention is concentrated to some extent by the practice of contemplation at that place, the hidden force of that centre is awakened automatically within the devotee and the devotee thereby becomes capable of concentrating his attention at that centre and going into the *Samadhi* state and when the sound current descending from above becomes audible, the spirit of the devotee is enabled to move upward In the case of persons, who contemplate at the lower end of the spinal cord, the navel or at the heart centre, powers of these centres are awakened but most of these persons g t lost in the joy or bliss which results from contemplation at these points and begin to think that they have reached the last stage that can be reached by the practice of *Yoga*.

DISCOURSE 17

ANSWER TO A QUESTION

A gentleman has enquired as to how a successor to the departing Sant Satguru[1] is appointed in the Radhasoami Faith? The answer to this question is briefly given in Bachan 250 of Sar Bachan[2] (Prose) Part II and it is that on the departure of a Sant Satguru, the *Guru Dhar*[3], which is also known as *Nij Dhar*[4], enters the succeeding Satguru and after that the arrangement for the care and protection of the human beings (*Jivas*) is continued through the Successor A Leader or Chief is appointed in the world by any one of the four methods, viz, first, by majority of votes of the public, secondly, by selection, thirdly, by nomination, fourthly, by heredity.

In the first case, the entire community is given an opportunity to vote and the person who is supported by the majority becomes the Leader or the President. In the second case, some selected persons who are the representatives of the public select a specially qualified person from amongst themselves or from the public. In the third case, the Leader nominates his successor in his life-time and in the fourth case,

1. The idea of the word 'Sant' may be partially expressed by the English word 'Saint' 'Satguru' (Sat Guru) literally means True Guru or True Religious Preceptor 'Sant Satguru' would thus stand for a 'Religious Preceptor' with highly developed spiritual powers The special sense in which the expression is used in the Radhasoami Faith is 'a Master, who either had, by means of devotional practices, fully developed his spiritual faculties and realized the Supreme Being or is possessed of this high status from birth'. 2. Vide Note 3 on page 9 3. The expression 'Nij Dhār' refers to the Supreme Tide which issues forth from the Supreme Spiritual Ocean i e Merciful Radhasoami and expands into the lower creation for the gracious object of redeeming spirit-entities. On the earth it assumes the Human Form of the Satguru. Hence it is also known as 'Guru Dhār' 4. See Note 3 above.

the father is succeeded by his son. Besides these four methods, another method has also been noticed, viz, that the person who controls the administration, the army or the treasury, forcibly begins to rule the masses and the masses quietly submit to his rule as was recently (about 1928) seen in the case of the Shah of Persia None of these five methods is however followed in the Radhasoami Faith. When the *Nij Dhar* enters the Successor, the devotees get clear internal directions to present themselves at the Feet of the Successor. On receiving these directions, the devotees present themselves for confirmation of the internal directions and on getting complete satisfaction, they put faith and trust in Him. It is man's nature that he gets perplexed when he has to face some difficulty and he repeatedly thinks about it or takes counsel with others, but a *Suratvant*[1] Person i e. one whose spiritual faculties are fully awakened and who has been entrusted with the *Seva*[2] in connection with the emancipation of *Jivas* makes use of his intuition and not of his intellect or thinking faculties. Moreover, He comes to know the entire future programme relating to his mission at the time of the entry of the *Nij Dhar* within Him. Therefore he is fully prepared to meet difficulties before they actually arise and besides, he receives instructions through intuition regarding action which has to be taken on any particular occasion. In other words, a *Suratvant* Person performs the most difficult tasks in the world in a care-free manner and the devotees who present themselves at His Feet for testing Him can easily experience this virtue in Him. Besides this, the devotees when they have come into contact with Him experience special facility and a state of bliss during Satsang and also during their spiritual practices. On getting such directions and indications the Satsang public gradually establishes faith

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1. Refers to a Person whose 'Surat' or spirit is fully awake i e. a Person whose mind and senses are under complete control and who always acts from the spiritual plane. 2 'Sevā' means service. Here it means service of the Lord.

in the Satguru of the time and within a short time, the entire Satsang community, with the exception of a few unlucky souls, engages itself with love and faith in the internal and external activities of the Satsang as was the case in the time of the departed Sant Satguru. In other words, the Sant Satguru of the time by giving unmistakable indications and proofs, both external and internal, to devotees yearning for such indications and help attracts them to His Feet. Persons who are not eager for their future spiritual progress or whose minds had become prejudiced for some reason or other against the Successor Satguru in the time of the previous Sant Satguru shut their doors against investigation and sit at their homes and thus deprive themselves of the open grace of the Sant Satguru of the time. Such persons after their death are however reborn in families where they can easily join Satsang at an early age and thereafter the process of their spiritual advancement restarts. There is no doubt that this mode of succession is quite a novel one but the experience of the past fifty years clearly shows that there could be no better method than this and no person other than the All-powerful Being could, while acting on these principles, continue and carry on his work and mission.

DISCOURSE 18

MEANING OF POEM 12 OF BACHAN 35 OF SAR BACHAN (POETRY)

प्रेम भरी मेरी घट की गगरिया,
छूट गई मो से मलिन नगरिया।

Prem Bharī merī ghat kı gagariā
Chhūt gayee mōn se malın nagarıā.

Translation —

The pitcher[1] of my body (*Nij ghat*[2] is meant) has been filled with Love[3] and the result is that my spirit has come clean out of this dirty region of *Maya*[4]. I had to face severe hardships in crossing the dirty region of *Maya* because,

नौ दूतन मो से धूम मचाई,
दसवें ने मोहिं खेंच चढ़ाई।

Nau dūtan mōn se dhūm machāī,
Dasven ne mōhin khench chaṛhāī

Translation —

The nine openings (*dvaras*[5]), in the activities of which my spirit had remained engaged since the beginning, had kept the spirit tied down and were pulling it towards themselves with great force but as Love had completely filled my inner self, my spirit

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1 In the Religion of Saints human body has been spoken of as made up of two pitchers A pitcher has a mouth and a hollow within. If man's body is cut into two at the neck, the two portions, viz, the trunk and the head, would resemble two pitchers one overturned over the other and joined together The upper pitcher (The Head) is spoken of as the 'Nij' ghat' i e the 'spirit's own ghat', because the seat of the spirit in human body is in a part of the head Hindi words गगरिया (gagariā) and घट (ghat), both mean a pitcher. 2. Vide Note 1 above 3 Love of the Satguru or Supreme Being 4 'Māyā' is the 'Śakti' of Brahma or of Kāl Purusha, the Presiding Deity of the entire creation of the Pind and Brahmānda It is the source of all creation on the physical and mental planes i e all creation where matter is mixed up with spirituality to a greater or lesser extent. 'Region of Māyā' refers to all regions of Pind and Brahmānda 5. The human body has nine apertures (i e 2 eyes, 2 ears, 2 nostrils, mouth, male organ and anus) As these apertures represent sense-organs and all man's activities on the physical plane are done through these sense-organs, the spirit current continuously flows to all the sense-organs and to these apertures.

ascended towards the tenth *dvara*[1] or opening. During this interval

हंस मंडली फौज लड़ाई,
काल दुष्ट अब पीठ दिखाई।

Hans mandlī fauj laṛāī
Kāl dusht ab peeth dikhāī

Translation —

My inward *vrittis*[2] which were extremely pure and which can be called the army of *Hamsas*[3] fought very bravely with the outward *vrittis* and the result of this war between gods and demons[4] was that the demons (i.e, outward *vrittis*) were completely defeated and *Kal* i.e. mind[5] which was their leader was vanquished And thereupon—

माया आई मोहि लुभावन,
कनक कामिनी बान छुड़ावन।

Māyā āyee mōhin lubhāvan,
Kanak kāminī bān chhurāvan.

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1 The expression 'Daswān dvāra' i e tenth dvāra or opening refers to the aperture at the seat of the spirit in the human body which opens inwards into the head and after entering which the spirit is able to establish its contact with higher regions 2. The word 'vritti' is from verb 'वृत्' (vrit) 'to roll down' or 'to flow'. The flow of attention or the spiritual current can thus be termed a 'vritti'. The flow of attention or spirit current is both inwards and outwards to external objects As such, vrittis are both inward and outward 3. 'Hamsa' is the name of a bird believed to be spotlessly white and which eats only pearls It is considered an emblem of purity and thus of spirituality as well This is why spiritually-advanced persons are called in India as Hamsas. Likewise, spirit in its purest form is also often designated as 'Hamsa' 4 In Hindu mythology gods and demons fought again and again Here inward vṛittis have been compared to gods and outward vrittis to demons. 5. In the Religion of Saints man's mind is believed to be an emanation of Kāl Purusha, as his spirit is that of Merciful Radhasoami.

Trnnslation—

Maya tried to entice me and shot at me arrows of (i.e offered attractions in the form of) wealth and women but could not do anything, because

मैं भी उमँग नवीन सँभारी,
मार लिया दल उसका भारी ।

Main bhī umang navīn sanbhārī
Mār liā dal uskā bhārī

Translation—

I began to bring into play ever-new fervour, i e. waves of love and the result was that the vast army of *Maya* was also defeated.

भागी माया छोड़ा देश,
मैं सतगुरु को करूँ अदेश ।

Bhāgī Māyā chhōṛā deś
Main Satguru kō karūn adeś.

Translation—

On the defeat of the army, *Maya* left my path clear, i e. material inclinations and tendencies disappeared altogether. For this victory, I bow again and again at the Feet of the Revered Guru.

सतगुरु पकड़ी अब मोरी बहियाँ,
खींच चढ़ाया गगन मझइयाँ ।
धुन सुन कर अब भई निहाल
सत्तपुरुष मेरे दीन दयाल ।

Satguru pakaṛī ab mōrī bahiyān,
Kheench charhāyā gagan majhaiyān
Dhun sun kar ab bhayee nihāl
Satt Purush mere deen dayāl.

Translation—

The Revered Guru caught hold of my arm and

pulled me up towards the sky, that is, on seeing the Guru, my spirit started going upwards and was filled with intense joy on hearing the internal sound. My Satguru is very merciful and I have no tongue to thank Him. He drew an humble and worthless fellow like me inward and allowed me contact with Himself that is, through His kindness my spirit came into contact with the Satguru in His Form of *Śabda* (Spiritual Sound).

दया करी मोहि अंग लगाई,
चरन ओट गहि सरन समाई।

Dayā karī mōhin ang lagāī,
Charan ōt gahi saran samāī.

Translation—

On coming into contact with the *Śabda*, my spirit became entirely dependent on the Satguru, that is the flow of my spirit thereafter was directed towards the internal Sound. The result was that—

कोटि जनम की खबर जनाई,
जनम मरन अब दूर नसाई।
प्रेम प्रीति का मिला खज़ाना,
जीत रीति गुरु शब्द पिछाना।
शब्द पाय सत शब्द पुकारी,
चली सुरत और निज धुन धारी।

Kōti janam kī khabar janāī
Janam maran ab dūr nasāī
Prem prīti kā milā khazānā,
Jīt rīti Guru Śabda pichhānā.
Śabda pāe Sat Śabda pukārī,
Chalī Sūrat aur nij dhun dhārī.

Translation—

My spirit was at once awakened spiritually i e. one by one all the covers were removed from over my

spirit and I achieved self-realization. As these covers on which all the *samskaras*[1] of my past lives were imprinted were being removed, I got knowledge of all my past lives, so much so that on removal of impurities of all kinds my spirit became immune for ever from the cycle of births and deaths and I was filled with unlimited love and faith and I came to know how victory over matter is gained. I heard within me the *Śabda* of *Trikuti*[2] and by and by the sound of *Satya Lok* also became audible. The spirit then came into contact with the Sound coming from its Original Home (*Nij Dham*) and proceeded further and ultimately became one with Merciful Radhasoami

राधास्वामी अन्तरजामी, गति उनकी कस करूँ बखानी।

Radhasoami antarjāmī, Gati unkī kas karūn bakhānī

Translation —

I am unable to describe the High Majesty of Merciful Radhasoami, my tongue and heart are both powerless. He alone, being All-knowing, knows this secret.

DISCOURSE 19

IS THE WORLD AN ILLUSION ?

A gentleman has asked how far it is correct on the part of *Vedantists*[3] to say that the world is not real and all its goods

1 Vide Note 2 on page 20. 2. The original Hindi word is गुरु शब्द (Guru Śabda) Trikuṭī, the Loka of Brahma, is known as 'गुरु पद' (Guru Pada), the Region of the Guru Hence Guru Śabda is Śabda of Trikutī
3. The word 'Vedānta' stands for 'Vedānta Darśana', one of the six schools of Indian Philosophy. The principal idea of this School is that there is nothing else but 'Brahma' in the creation To adopt a consistent position, the visible material world is explained away as mere illusion. 'Vedāntist' is one who holds these doctrines.

and its pleasures and pain are dreams and mere illusions. There was a time when ideas of this kind were very prevalent in India with the result that the masses gave up putting in effort and labour and began to waste most of their time in idleness and indolence. If as a result of such ideas, Indians considering worldly pleasures to be false or unreal, had become disgusted with them and had attempted to realize the Reality, i e. the Spirit, there would have been no harm. On the contrary it would have been very good because, on the awakening of the spirit, intelligence of a very high order would have developed and they would have realized correctly the true nature of the world and of the duties of human beings. But, as has been mentioned before, the people continued to act under the influence of worldly love and hatred but whenever an occasion arose for putting in effort and labour, they remained indolent under the plea that the world was unreal.

To decide whether the world is true and real or untrue and unreal, we would first have to define what is 'true' and what 'untrue'. If true (*Satya*) is something which ever remains the same i e in which there is no change whatsoever at any time, then the whole world and our bodies and minds also are 'untrue' because every moment changes take place in all these three. And if 'true' is something the existence of which can be known by using our five senses and the intellect, the world would have to be accepted as 'true'. It is correct that the knowledge we get in our wakeful state often turns out to be wrong in dream but we also know that on waking up the knowledge gained during the dream state turns out to be wrong and the knowledge of wakeful condition again becomes true. The point is that when we do not use in dream those sense-organs which we use in the wakeful state, it is quite normal if in dream we do not get experiences of the wakeful state. If any person, who is in wakeful condition and sees an elephant in front of him, closes his eyes and says that his knowledge of the elephant was wrong because he now sees darkness in place of the form of an elephant, his statement

would be improper and wrong. In the same way, it would be incorrect to call our experiences of wakeful state wrong if we do not get them in dream. The Religion of Saints teaches us that the material creation or *Prakriti* is spirituality of a low order and the spirit or the *Surat* is spirituality of a very high order. A third force called *jivatma* comes into being when the *Atma* or spirit and *Prakriti* or matter coalesce together. This is known as the '*granthi*[1]' or knot of the matter and spirit. It is this *jivatma*[2] which puts questions and it is this *jivatma* which according to its own capacity gives replies to these questions. If any *jivatma* is able to untie this knot of matter and spirit, then his spirit having separated itself from matter, would regain its own original state. Whatever we see in the world are mere creations of these *jivatmas*. For instance, cotton and wollen clothes are manufactured out of the parts of the bodies evolved by *jivatmas* that exist in cotton plants and the bodies of sheep. In the same manner, all fruits, flowers, sweets etc. are obtained from the bodies evolved by *jivatmas*. Now, as the *jivatma* is not anything real or an essence but is only the result of the coalescence of the *Atma* and *Prakriti* (spirit and matter), the entire creation evolved by the *jivatmas* becomes unreal if we look at the real essence only. From this point of view, it would not be improper if anybody calls the world unreal. It is however improper for the common people who are wholly oblivious of *Atma* and whose minds think only in terms of profit or loss and on the basis of the increase or decrease of their worldly possessions and enjoyment to call the world unreal. We would here refer to two incidents and request such people to put themselves in the conditions mentioned in these two examples and then say whether the world is real or unreal

(1) A person dreams during the night that it is morning time and his servant comes with a telegram in his hand. The gentleman opens the envelope and reads that his son

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1. Vide Note 2 on page 45. 2. Vide Note 2 on page 45.

has been shot by some enemy. On reading the news he suddenly starts up, wakes and thinks in his mind how ugly a dream he had seen that night. Some time after, he again goes to sleep and three or four hours afterwards gets up as usual in the morning and after washing himself sits down for his breakfast. Just then his servant actually brings a telegram and this person, surprised and perplexed, opens the envelope with trembling hands and reads the same words which he had seen in the dream On reading the news, he becomes confused, leaves the breakfast table and covering his head goes to his bed and remains lying there quietly for about three hours till the servant comes and addresses him and informs him that people have brought the dead body of his son. He then sees his dead son with his own eyes. Was the experience this person had in the dream state false ? Or was the reading of the telegram by him on waking up and seeing his son dead of a bullet wound false ?

(2) 'The Daily Times' of Chattanoga (Tennessey State, U.S.A.) in its issue of 13.2.1918 wrote that the Negro, Jim Mac-Al-Harren by name, who had shot dead two white Americans, named Rodgers and Tygret, on last Friday at Astel Springs and had wounded a third person, was taken away at night at 7.40 P M. by twelve men wearing masks and was burnt alive. When this person was being burnt, about two thousand persons, including women and children, were watching the scene. Masked men took the captive about a quarter of a mile from the railway station and they collected a heap of fire-wood for burning him. The crowd followed them and remained there till the last.

Masked men at first bound the Negro to a tree and lighted the fire quite near him. When the fire flared up, they thrust a long iron bar therein to heat it. When the bar became red hot, a man took it out from the fire and took its red hot end near to the Negro's body. The Negro went mad out of fear and caught hold of the red hot iron in his hands,

both his hands began to burn at once and the whole atmosphere was filled with the bad smell of burning flesh and the burning Negro began to shriek. Thereafter those men applied the hot bar many times to the different parts of the Negro's body. The unfortunate half-dead Negro was screaming in a most pitiable manner, so loudly that his shrieks were heard in the town. After torturing the poor Negro for a few minutes in this beastly manner the masked men sprinkled kerosene oil on his pants and feet, put him on the pyre and set fire to it As the firewood caught fire, the Negro cried out and requested that he be shot. The whole gathering then began to grin and shout at him. In the meantime the fire flared up and blue sparks from the burning hair of the head of the Negro began to go sky-ward and his shrieks also died away. Was the Negro merely dreaming? Was his experience of pain simply an unreal experience? Was the crowd of two thousand persons also dreaming the same dream as the Negro dreamt?

DISCOURSE 20

RELIANCE ON LORD'S MERCY GREATLY HELPS DEVOTEES TO BEAR THE HARDSHIPS OF LIFE

A rich man of Calcutta, tired of life, first gave poison to his two innocent children and then took it himself and died leaving a note that he had lost his belief in the existence of God and being sorely disappointed in life he had acted in this manner. Everybody knwos that when a man is surrounded by calamities and finds his condition worsening inspite of hard work and incessant efforts, he turns to God, goddess, deity, ghost or goblin and if he suffers disappointment there also, he turns mad and acts on impulse and often commits suicide. Hence what this rich man did was

nothing very strange, but this event affords a very useful lesson, that, so long as a man's faith in the mercy of God subsists, he does not lose courage and patiently bears the acutest troubles and also hopes for betterment. In other words, reliance on Lord's mercy is such a sheet anchor that a man, sitting in the boat of Hope, can lower it in the sea of life and look on fearlessly at the drama of the world But as people in general have neither any knowledge about the Lord, nor do they have true faith in Him, an ordinary gust of wind often breaks asunder the anchor-cable and sinks his boat of Hope Besides this, many men quite unreasonably foist their hopes on God's Grace, enter into business bargains far beyond their capacity or indulge in litigation to make an illegal gain and suffer disappointment at the proper time. No doubt, the Religion of Saints teaches that every devotee should have true and abiding faith in the existence and Grace of the Supreme Being but it also prescribes that knowing the Supreme Being to be omnipresent and omniscient, the devotee should not take to any such action nor should be entertain any such hope which may bring him down from the ideal of *paramartha*. Reliance on the Grace of the true Supreme Being is not inculcated so that the devotee may make the Supreme Being work for him according to his wishes and thus ensure fulfilment of his proper and improper desires but the object is that when he finds himself in adverse circumstances, he should be able to maintain his courage, remain free from all unnecessary worries and anxieties and should be able to make proper efforts. As long as we have to stay in the world, it is natural for us to have to provide for our worldly needs and in doing so, to face adverse circumstances and it would be quite wrong and meaningless on our part to expect that as we have taken the protection of the *Satguru*, the laws of nature would not apply to us and we shall escape all worldly calamities. We shall have to live our life knowing and following the laws of nature intelligently. We shall have to make suitable arrangements for

protecting ourselves against enemies, cheats and trouble-makers and we shall also have to bear all kinds of calamities that come to us by divine dispensation or as a result of physical events and carry out our duties but, unlike ordinary men who pass their lives depending on their wealth, cleverness and daring and the help of their fast friends and make use of them when in adverse circumstances, we shall have to rely on the Grace of the true Supreme Being and thus pass our days. If adverse circumstances appear, we shall, while relying on the Grace of the Creator, have to make use of proper remedies and efforts and it can be said without any fear that no devotee would have to suffer disappointment if he works on these principles. It is possible that the difficulties of a devotee may apparently increase for some time and he may not find succour from any side, but it cannot be that a devotee, who acts with care and always keeps the ideal of *paramartha* before his eyes, would be put in the fire of anxieties and worries for ever or for a long time.

DISCOURSE 21

WHAT IS THE OBJECT IN SATSANG OF WORLDLY PROGRESS ?

A strange craze has overtaken the world now-a-days. Every country, every nation and every community is striving hard to surpass all others in the matter of progress and even the Negroes of Africa and Red Indians of America are full of excitement and zeal to do something. It is therefore no wonder that every caste and every community in India also is waking up. On hearing from all sides slogans like "wake up" and "move ahead" some excitement is produced in the hearts of Satsangi brothers also in natural course, and it manifests itself form time to time in the *Satsang* community also. When *Satsangis* holding antiquated views hear

these things and find that serious efforts are being made in Dayalbagh in regard to education and industries, they conclude unreasonably that the *Satsang* community has also been carried away by the craze that has overtaken the world. Undoubtedly, it would be the greatest calamity and misfortune for our community if we fall from our ideals of *paramartha* and get possessed by the desire for worldly progress, power and wealth, but so long as the protective hand of Merciful Radhasoami is on our heads and members of the *Satsang* Community are keen on acting according to His teachings, this kind of calamity and misfortune cannot come to us It is true that proposals for the improvement of the college etc. were discussed in the *Prem Pracharak* and in the *Satsang* and *Satsangi* brothers were openly advised to help *Satsang* institutions as much as they could, but efforts for the improvement of the college etc. are being made only with the idea that these institutions should be able to stand on their own legs and *Satsangi* brothers should feel some relief in the discharge of their duties in respect of education of their children and also that the *Satsangi* brothers who desire to spend their lives in Dayalbagh may get suitable work to earn their livelihood. It has never been our idea that like others the *Satsang* Community also should engage itself in and get excited about education and industries. We understand quite well that the path for progress, which different countries and nations have adopted, would take them away from the ideal of *paramartha* and sooner or later would involve the whole world in troubles. All living organisms of the world subsist on the bodies of other living organisms as their food. For instance, lions subsist on the bodies of goats, goats on the plants and plants on mineral substances and to obtain that food every animate being uses different methods, depending on the structure of its brain, the formation of its body and its strength. For example, weak animals obtain their food by theft or guile, (e.g. the mouse steals corn and the cat kills its prey by deceit), healthy and civilized human beings

earn their living by their hard work and labour and produce grain from the land and clever people maintain themselves by robbing and deceiving the simple and the weak. Civilized nations therefore concentrate their efforts on drawing in all the gold and silver of the world into their own coffers by developing their crafts and trade so that every countryman of theirs could lead a prosperous life and produce healthy and capable progeny for the future and when they get old, there should be some proper arrangement for looking after them and no foreign country or nation could attack and subdue them. There is no harm in all this because if a country makes efforts to stand on its own legs, it cannot be harmful to any other country, but a difficult situation is created when one nation or country actuated by greed and jealousy, increases its military strength to such a formidable extent that the neighbouring nations or countries have no alternative left save to increase their own military strength also by undergoing all kinds of hardships. When the nations and countries which are far ahead of others in the matter of worldly progress come to know of the conditions prevailing in the neighbouring countries, they attack weaker neighbours on getting suitable opportunity and the result is that due to war between nations and countries the blood of poor people flows like water. *Satsangi* brothers can easily understand that all these troubles start from an apparently innocent and simple desire to fill one's stomach and to stand on one's own legs. It was in this sense that it has been stated above that it could never be the policy of the Radhasoami *Satsang* that it should fall from the ideals of *paramartha* and adopt the ways of other nations Our desire and our efforts at present end with making proper arrangements for the education and maintenance of our children so that the children of poor *Satsangis* ignorant of world conditions may not be put to unnecessary trouble for want of means and experience As at present our community is very small, our needs and responsibilities are also small and

thus it would be improper and wrong for us to dream of big things at present. It is true that all human beings are the children of Merciful Radhasoami and Merciful Radhasoami has laid the foundation of the *Satsang* for the welfare of all the living beings of the creation, but this does not mean that we should, like shallow-minded people, begin to indulge in tall talk from now and on the strength of a few ordinary institutions begin to entertain ideas of bringing about a visible change in the civilization of the world and its economic conditions. The only thing that needs to be done at present is that efforts should be made according to means at our disposal to provide for the few needs of the *Satsang* community and also to make ourselves and our children fit for *Seva* on a big scale. That person alone can render service on a big scale who can make sacrifices on a big scale and only that person who has got the requisite means for it can make sacrifices on a big scale. In other words, service on a big scale can be done only by a person who has a healthy body, an alert, strong and pure mind, and wealth in sufficient quantity to be sacrificed in service To talk of service and sacrifice without possessing even one of these three things is nothing but mere tall talk.

DISCOURSE 22

ANSWERS TO THREE QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE CREATOR

A gentleman has asked—

"How am I to believe that there is certainly a Creator of this universe ?"

The reply to this question is very easy. If a man, animal or tree stands in need of an *Atma* or a spirit for the creation and sustenance of its body, then it follows that some

Atma or Spirit is necessary also for creating and sustaining the entire universe. Just as innumerable creatures reside inside the body created by our *Atma* or Spirit, in like manner many living creatures like men, beasts, birds etc. roam about in the creation or the body created by the Supreme Being. That Supreme Being who is the Master of the whole universe is the Creator or the Maker of the universe.

He has further asked,

"If there really is a Creator of this universe and He has created it without consulting us and even now He does whatever he likes, then why should we care to know anything about Him at all ?"

The reply is that in the present state of his mind it is really useless for the questioner to be anxious to know Him. But there may be a person who finds in the creation a manifestation of wonderful skill, wisdom and mercy and thinks that—

(a) all this wonderful creation could not have come into existence by mere accident,

(b) whatever arts and sciences man has discovered, he has done so after understanding the laws of nature; and that

(c) nature is such a fathomless ocean of knowledge that from the beginning of the creation till today man has not been able to know even a drop of it inspite of all his attempts and efforts.

Such a person must therefore feel that—

(d) it is impossible that this earth alone in the whole creation is inhabited ;

(e) it cannot be that the millions of stars shining in the firmament are mere lifeless balls of light and the innumerable suns, moons and planets have been created merely to sustain and give light to our earth;

(f) it must be, that besides the earth, there are other worlds which are inhabited, that the bodies of the denizens of those worlds must be made of the same substance of which those worlds are made and their habits, i.e the mode of their life, their pleasure and pain would be in conformity with their bodies and the spirituality of those worlds ,

(g) hence it is possible, nay necessary, that Lokas superior to this earth from the point of view of spirituality be in existence in the creation and that the spirits residing in those Lokas may not, like us, be subject to births and deaths, cares and worries and pleasure and pain. If such Lokas and such life do exist, there is no reason why we should not make proper efforts and adopt proper means to reach those Lokas. When the earth evidently exists with the help of light and vitality obtained from the Sun and revolves round it like a child for maintaining its existence, there is no reason why we should not go from the earth to the Sun to live there. That *Loka* is self-luminous. Every particle of it has more energy than any particle of the earth. The bodies of the denizens of that *Loka* would be more resplendent than ours Their lives would be longer than ours. Their feelings of pleasure and pain would be different from ours. It is sheer folly on our part after getting the human body to lead lives like animals on this earth. Come, let us make an effort and find out the secret about the Creator so that we can understand the universe correctly and be able to know about the highest region in it and the place having utmost happiness and the secrets of the best from of life i.e. human body, in order that by proper efforts and practice our spirit may get rid of this mortal world and enter that Loka.

For a person of such a mentality and understanding it becomes a pleasant duty to make investigations and to be concerned about having a realization of the Creator and to make necessary effort for it inspite of the fact that He created the universe without consulting us.

His third question is —

"Admitting that it is useful and necessary for us to know the Creator of the universe, how can we know Him ?"

The answer is that you should first search for such a person as may have reached that status, secondly, on coming into contact with Him, serve Him and associate with Him, thirdly, that you should carry out with your heart and soul the practices which He teaches you, and fourthly, that you should continue your efforts and labour until you obtain satisfactory results.

DISCOURSE 23

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES AND PRACTICES ARE NOT THE IDEALS OF TRUE PARAMARTHA

A sikh gentleman stated that he had become a true Sikh, i e. he always wore the five Kakkas[1] and also a small blue dastar[2] under the turban, he did not eat anything from the hands of men who did not wear *kesh*[3], he recited the Holy Japji[4] etc. in the morning after taking his bath and during the day he read *Bani*[5] of the tenth Guru, Guru Govind Singh Sahab. On hearing these things, he was questioned whether any inner change had taken place as a result of these actions He replied that the change was that he did not feel any love for anybody except a Sikh and that he liked to sit with

1. Every Sikh is expected to have Kesh (long hair) on his head, Kanghā (comb) in his hair, Karā (steel bangle) on his right hand, Kachh (short drawers) and Kripān (sword) These things are known as five K's (or Kakkas) as the names of all the 5 things begin with the letter क or K The custom of wearing these things was begun in the time of Guru Govind Singh in 1699 A D 2. Blue cloth tied by Sikhs on the head under the turban 3 Long hair. 4 The Holy Japji. 5. The word 'Bānī' is used collectively for poetical and prose literature produced by any Saint.

Sikhs only and sing praises of the ten Gurus He was told to close his eyes and say what he then saw. The reply was that he saw only darkness. He was told that it was clear that whatever he had done to become a true Sikh, all that related to wakeful condition only, i e. he could engage in thoughts about Sikh religion and its teachings and in the contemplation of the Gurus only in the wakeful condition and therefore when he closed his eyes and turned his attention inward, he could see darkness only and that therefore he had not yet become a true Sikh He alone can be called a true Sikh who, on withdrawing his attention from the world outside and turning it inwards, obtains the *darśana* either of his *Atma* (spirit), the true Creator or of His Guru. All the true Gurus of the Sikh religion had this qualification and this is why while living in the body and in the world, they led detached lives and it was because of this qualification that the whole world worships them It is no doubt praiseworthy to adopt external symbols or to read or recite the Bānī of Great Personalities but true Saints do not take their birth only to teach these things The important point about a true Guru is that when he grants protection to an individual, he takes him out of the morass of *Maya* and turns him into one like himself. Hence a true Sikh should be a person who has taken the protection of a true Guru and becomes purer day by day through His grace and by the performance of the practice which the Guru has taught him, who feels that his attention instead of engaging in activities through the nine apertures of the body remains directed mostly towards the tenth and who gets from time to time the consciousness of subtle or higher spiritual (*sukṣham*) planes and who on account of the opening of his inner eye clearly differentiates between *Atma* and non-*Atma*.

Alas ! the Sikh gentleman did not like this advice and only replied that he had already said that he did not like to fraternize with non-Sikhs. This incident has been referred to here with a view to ensure that *Satsangi* brothers take lesson

from it and be careful not to commit a similar mistake and, neglecting the true teachings of the Radhasoami Faith, may not delude themselves into the belief that they were leading the lives of true *Satsangis*. It is very necessary and also good to do *Seva* with body, mind and money from time to time or to read the holy *Bani* of Merciful Radhasoami but the real teaching of the Radhasoami Faith is that one should take a deep plunge inwards. *Seva* (service), *Satsang* and spiritual practices are simply instrumental in helping to reach the Ideal but are not the Ideal. They can only be the 'means' to arrive at a certain result but they cannot be the result itself. It is the result which is the ideal. Our ideal is to realize the true Creator for which purpose only we have taken the protection of Merciful Radhasoami and for this purpose only we have been instructed to perform *Seva* (service), *Ŝatsang* and the Sound Practice.

DISCOURSE 24

A USEFUL LESSON FROM THE SATSANG BINTI[1] (PRAYER)

If one wants to ascertain the spiritual ideal of any religious society or to find out the spiritual experiences of a religious leader, it is also a good method to examine carefully the prayer current in that religious society or the prayer composed by the religious leader concerned. As the devotee contemplates the Holy Feet of the beloved Deity or the Satguru or presents himself before Him when reciting the prayer or *Binti*, the author expresses the deepest thoughts of his heart in the verses of that prayer and, mentioning in brief the difficulties of his life, prays through the medium of the verses

1 The original Sanskrit word is 'Vinati', meaning humility and obeisance In Hindi, it now means prayer. 'Satsang Bintī' means the prayer in common use in the Radhasoami Satsang.

for help and mercy One can by studying those verses easily know the ideas the devotee entertains in his heart about his Deity (*Isht Deva*), the troubles and difficulties that harass him and the status or ideal he wants to achieve. The meanings of the *Binti* which is recited after the morning *Satsang* in Dayalbagh[1] are given below ,—

दीन दुखी होय आज, हे सतगुरु हम दास मिल ।
सीस चरन पर राख, बार बार बिनती करें ॥ १ ॥

Dīn dukhī hōye āj he Satguru ham dās mil,
Sīs charan par rākh, bār bār bintī karen. 1

Translation —

Oh Lord, Our Revered Satguru ! Giving up all egotism i e. in all humility and distressed at the high-handedness of the mind, we bow our heads at Your Lotus Feet and submit our prayer.

उट्ठें लहर अपार, भवजल गहिर गँभीर मध ।
ज़हर कहर की धार, इस रचना सिर पर गिरे ॥ २ ॥

Utthen lahar apār, bhavjal gahir ganbhīr madh,
Zahar qahar kī dhār, is rachnā sir par gire. 2

Translation —

Infinite and immeasureable waves arise in the fathomless ocean[2] of this world and deadly poison rains in torrents from above on the whole creation and as a result outward tendencies of the mind have become stronger and people of the world have forgotten the *Atma* and the true Supreme Being and are running after material objects of the world.

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1. Headquarters of the Radhasoami Ṣatsang. 2 The words 'Bhava Sāgar' and 'Bhavajala' are used in Hindu religion and also by the Saints for the material plane (this world) on which the spirits have their existence 'Bhava' means 'creation' and 'Sāgar or 'jala' means 'sea' or 'ocean'. The two words are used for the material creation as it is as difficult for spirits to get out of it as it is for a man thrown into the sea to get out of it.

गहरी दया बिचार, हे समरथ पूरन धनी।
देओ कष्ट निवार, काल करम की धार के ॥ ३ ॥

Gahrī dayā bichār, he samarath pūran dhanī.
Deō kasht nivār, kāl karam kī dhār ke 3

Translation—

Oh Omnipotent and Almighty Lord ! bestow Your intense grace on us and free us from the afflictions of poisnous torrents of *Kal* and *Karma*[1] falling on the creation.

तुम्हरी सरन अडोल, हम दासन ने दृढ़ गही।
तुम्हरी मेहर अतोल, कस मुख से बर्नन करें ॥ ४ ॥

Tumharī saran adōl, ham dāsan ne drirh gahī
Tumharī mehar atōl, kas mukh se barnan karen. 4

Translation —

Oh Supreme Father ! we have accepted Your protection with determination and without wavering (No hardships or painful conditions or greed of material objects can deceive or shake us, for our attention is fixed only in Your Feet). The grace which You showered on us after we took protection under You is unbounded and we are incapable of describing it.

चरन कमल की छाँह, हे दाता तुम निज दई।
क्या गुन तुम्हरे गायँ, आप मिले तुम आन कर ॥ ५ ॥

Charan kamal kī chhānh, he dātā tum nij dayee,
Kyā gun tumhare gāyn, āp mile tum ān kar. 5

Translation—

Oh Great Benefactor ! You bestowed on us the protection of Your Lotus Feet ! In what way can we praise You ? (There is no limit to Your grace). You

1 Vide Notes 1 & 2 on page 33 The currents of Kāl and Karma flow downwards and their force is irresistible for jīvas

incarnated in this world for our sake and made it possible for us to recognize yourself.

ऐसी मेहर कराय, हम चित अब डोले नहीं ।
भवजल पार लँघाय, तुम चरनन में बास हो ॥ ६ ॥

Aisī mehar karāye, ham chit ab dōle nahīn,
Bhavjal pār langhāye, tum charnan men bās hō 6

Translation —

Now mercifully bestow on us such grace that the love and faith that You have engendered in us may continue unabated, our mind may not waver for any reason whatsoever and on crossing this ocean of the material world, we may get abode in Your Holy Feet i e. our spirits after crossing the material regions may enter the Pure Spiritual Region.

राधास्वामी दयाल, परम पुरुष पूरन धनी ।
निस दिन करो सँभाल, जब लग बेड़ा पार हो ॥ ७ ॥

Radhasoami Dayāl, Param Purush Pūran Dhanī
Nis din karō sambhāl, jab lag berā pār hō 7

Translation—

O August Being, Almighty Merciful Radhasoami ! Be pleased always to protect us until we get across this Ocean of the world.

मान लेव मेरे साइयाँ, एती अरज हमार ।
नेकहु बिलम्ब न कीजिये, चरन सरन बलिहार ॥ ८ ॥

Mān lev mere sāinyān, etī araz hamār,
Nekahu bilamb na kījiye, charan saran balihār 8

Translation—

O True Supreme Father ! Be pleased to grant this our prayer and grant it all at once. We are under the protection of Your Holy Feet and we gratefully surrender ourselves to You.

On studying this *Binti*. one can understand what desires lead a true *Satsangi* to the feet of his true Lord and what status he is struggling to achieve. The adverse forces of the ordinary laws of the creation and the Law of *Karma* are certainly pushing our boat away from the high ideals of *paramartha* Hence, prayer is offered humbly and meekly to the true Supreme Father that He may be pleased to lead the raft to its destination and He may so ordain that our spirit, getting rid of mind and matter may enter the Pure Spiritual Region and till that state is reached His Hand of Protection may rest on our heads so that our love for and faith in Him may not diminish. Knowing how precious a Jewel the Satguru is and in obedience to what laws He makes His advent on this earth and how difficult it is to recognize Him from His mode of life which is apparently like that of an ordinary individual, we proffer our grateful thanks in all sincerity for His grace in affording us all necessary facilities and for His great kindness in helping us to recognize Him.

DISCOURSE 25

IT IS FOOLISH TO TERM GURU BHAKTI[1] AS SLAVERY

A gentleman has objected, that the teachings of the Satsang[2] which lay stress on devotion (*Bhakti*) convert a man of courage into a coward, i e. when a man every now and then feels that he is a weak and sinful man, his courage and manly qualities become debased. His repeated prayers for grace and mercy make him so weak-hearted that neither can he bear an ordinary trouble nor does he have courage to take in hand any work of great responsibility. When it is poured into his ears every morning and evening that the

1. Vide Note 1 on page 10. 'Guru Bhakti' means Bhakti of the Guru. 2. The Radhasoami Satsang.

pleasure of the Guru should be the first consideration in every work and that His orders should be carried out without the least grumbling, how can he be expected to have any ideas of freedom and self-respect in his mind? Even a person of very high ideals, if he considers himself at all times to be a slave to another and devotes himself to his service by discouraging his own mind, would most necessarily develop in himself a spirit of slavery etc. etc

Obviously, all these objections about the teachings of the *Satsang* are wholly wrong and without foundation. While a person is the pupil of an able teacher or a physician, he acts on his instructions without the least objection, carries out his orders heart and soul, considers himself weak and ignorant in comparison to him, prays for his instructions and kind help from time to time, serves him by subduing his own mind and body and their needs and in this way secures high education, knowledge of intricate points and hidden secrets. Does he thereby give a proof of being a slave or of being a true pupil? Moreover, did the disciples of Prophet Mohammed, Lord Christ, Mahatma Buddha and the Sikh Gurus[1], who accomplished great tasks in their time and completely changed the trend of thought of the people in their age receive any education other than this? As a matter of fact, those who raise objections do not see any difference between ordinary human beings and true *Sadhs* and Saints, and therefore say that *Bhakti* teaches slavery. Is it not an established fact that a human being is greatly influenced by the company he keeps i.e by his associations? There is a saying in the English language which runs—"Tell me the company you keep and I will tell you what type of man you are." The meaning is that the ideas of people in whose company or association a man spends the greater part of his time become engrained in his habits and

1 By the expression 'Sike Gurus' are meant the 10 Gurus of the Sikh Religion, beginning with Nanak Sahab, the Founder and ending with Guru Govind Singh Sahab.

temperament Hence if any person devotes himself to the service of a true *Sadh* or Saint and assimilates within himself with love and faith his thoughts and the effect of his mode of life, then naturally he would, in a short time have pure thoughts and a pure heart like him. Those who subdue their minds are true heroes and not slaves and cowards. It is possible that a slave or a coward may control himself and behave submissively before his master but everybody can well understand that such people behave outwardly in one way and thoughts of an entirely different nature keep cropping up in their minds. Besides this, it is also a well-known saying that a person who wants to rule must first learn to obey. Many people when they occupy high places are not successful in taking work from their subordinates. It is not impossible that their failure may be due to the fact that they have not learnt the lesson of obedience. In history, there are hundreds, nay thousands of examples of earnest devotees, who for a long time kept themselves engaged in real and devoted service of their Guru or *Murshid*[1] but who, inspite of the fact that they had no worldly learning, accomplished tasks of such heroism and intelligence on receiving their orders that the brave and the wise of the present age feel astonished on hearing about them. For example, take the case of Shivaji[2] and Baba Banda[3]. On receiving orders from his Guru Ram Das, Shivaji, who was without any resources in men or material, vowed to efface the Moghul empire and planted the flag of Mahratta rule in South India before the very eyes of the Moghul Emperors. In the same way, Baba Banda who had been a Sadhu and recluse all his life, on receiving the orders of Guru Govind Singh, fought the Moghul Emperors so bravely that Muslim historians, while mentioning his name in their accounts, have

1. Persian synonym of 'Guru' 2. Shivaji lived from 1627 to 1680 A.D. He founded Mahratta rule in India and gave great impetus to Hindu revival 3 Guru Govind Singh, the 10th and last Guru of Sikhs directed Baba Banda to carry on the struggle against the Moghuls after him.

used the harshest possible language for him. In our opinion only those persons raise objections against *Guru Bhakti* who had never the good fortune to meet a true Guru and who never learnt how to show respect and honour to their parents and teachers, who never had occasion to read the history of true devotees and who consider roaming about like animals as freedom and who find it difficult to control their minds and senses and to render service to elders in order to receive instruction from them.

DISCOURSE 26

HOW CAN THE MIND BE TURNED AWAY FROM THE WORLD ?

A gentleman states that his mind remains generally indifferent to and forgetful of the true Supreme Being and takes keen interest in worldly affairs and asks whether there is any way by which the bent of his mind may be changed and it may develop an eager desire for devotion to the true Creator.

The condition of the mind in which this sort of question arises is of course not good but it is not also so bad, for knowing one's weaknesses and mistakes and desiring to get rid of them and to make efforts to that end is indicative of the existence of good *samskaras*[1] in the mind, otherwise ordinary persons in the world are unconsciously drifting away with the strong current of worldly pleasures and are quite content and nobody even thinks of finding out the secret of turning the mind inwards and of devotion to the true Supreme Being.

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1. Vide Note 2 on page 20.

Predominance of *Rajoguni*[1] or *Tamoguni*[1] attributes in the mind accounts for indifference towards God. When *Rajoguni* attributes predominate, the outward *vrittis*[2] flow with terrific force and just as one feels a peculiar kind of joy in running fast or in a high-speed aeroplane, in the same way the flow of outward *vrittis* with great force gives a special kind of joy. And as man's mind loves enjoyment, i e. is fond of pleasure, and remains attached to that work or those conditions in which it gets enjoyment and pleasure, or in other words, it develops *vrittis* relating to them, naturally the *Rajoguni* mind remains overfull with enjoyment from the flow of outward *vrittis*. Tamoguni mind indulges in sloth and idleness and remains indifferent to the world as well as the Supreme Being.

Now the only question that remains is how to get rid of these obstacles ? The answer is.—

We can get rid of these, first, by severe grief and trouble and secondly, by association with persons of *Satoguni vrittis*, i.e. with true devotees of the Creator. On experiencing severe grief and trouble, human beings generally get acutely disturbed and as a result give up vain worldly activities and indolence, begin to feel that by indulging in *Rajoguni* and *Tamoguni* tendencies they would get nothing but trouble and therefore it is better if attention is directed towards the true Creator, so that, on getting His grace and mercy they may be able to get rid of grief and trouble. In other words, when one's efforts and remedies are of no avail and produce results contrary to one's wishes and when he finds no friend

1. The three guṇas, viz, Sattva (सत्त्व), rajas (रजस्) and tamas (तमस्) in reference to man, represent the qualities of (i) equilibrium or goodness-mood or mood of righteousness, (ii) energy and activity or passion-mood and (iii) inertia and resistence to action or darkness-mood Attributes which originate from or lead to the qualities or mood of Sattva-guna are known as Satōgunī and similarly attributes which originate from or lead to the qualities or mood of Rajōguna are Rajōgunī and those which originate from or lead to the qualities and mood of Tamōguna are known as Tamōgunī.

or helper, his attention is perforce turned towards the Creator. Secondly, according to the saying—

صحبت مردانت از مردان کند
نار خندان باغ را خندان کند

Sohbate mardānat az mardān kunad,
Nāre khandān bāgh rā khandān kunad

Translation —

Even so shall the company of good men make thee like them. Just as the blooming pomegranate makes the whole garden appear in full bloom.

If a man lives in the society of true devotees, his mind gets impressed by their talk and mode of life and easily turns inwards The reason is that powerful *samskaras* which a man gets in the society of devotees subdue his old *Rajoguni* and *Tamoguni samskaras* completely and bring about a definite change in his conduct and bearing and after some time when he gets deeply influenced by their society, he becomes a different man altogether.

Out of the two methods described above for changing the direction of the tendencies of the mind, the first one is meant for persons who are quite foolish and the second is for well-behaved sensible gentlemen. Such a gentleman would search for the society of true devotees and a fool would wait till extreme suffering and troubles bring him to senses.

DISCOURSE 27

THE HUMAN BODY IS NOT A BUNDLE OF BONES, FLESH AND SKIN ONLY

It is a cardinal principle of the Religion of Saints that the human body is extremely precious and that it should be

fully appreciated It is the greatest misfortune to use the body merely for indulging in worldly enjoyment and for procreation. There is such an arrangement in this body that if a man makes proper efforts, he can attain the status of a god[1], a *Hamsa*[2] and a *Param Hamsa*[3]. Thc secret of this arrangement can be understood properly by remaining in close contact with a Saint[4]. Just as it is necessary to become the disciple of a competent teacher in order to understand and learn the secrets of this mundane world, similarly, for understanding and learning this secret it is necessary to accept the discipleship of a true Satguru.

Some say that, as far as one can see, the human body is only a bundle of bones and skin, but for men holding such views human life is only an opportunity for indulging in passions and desires. Persons with deeper outlook however know that the essence which gives life to the bones and skin of the human body, and is known as *Surat* or *Atma* i.e spirit, is the most precious essence in the creation. A man can establish contact with the objects of the creation and the forces of nature through the apertures of this body and if he energizes the hidden centres i e. the *chakras*[5] and *kamals*[6] in

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1 In India it has been generally believed that man can, by good deeds, attain higher categories of life and one such higher life is that of gods 2. The word 'Hamsa' has often been used by the Saints for the spirit when it is free from all impurities 3 'Parama Hamsa' is that pure spirit which has reached the Highest Region. 4 The Hindi expression is 'Siddha Purush' i.e the Person who has attained Siddhi or perfection It is thus used here for Saints Of course, the word 'Siddha' is often popularly used for ordinary faqirs etc. or those who achieve some psychic powers 5. Human body has six nerve-centres and there are also force-centres corresponding to these which are known as 'chakras'. If these force-centres are energized, other forces come into play and the devotee can establish contact with the deities of the corresponding regions in the creation 6. Like the six chakras of the physical body there are six centres in the brain and these are known as Kamals. If these 'kamals' are awakened, contact with the Deities of the regions of Brahmāṇḍa can be established.

his body, the faculties pertaining to higher planes are awakened, so much so, that he is able to realize his *Atma* and also the true Creator and thereby the cycle of births and deaths comes to an end for him and he achieves everlasting happiness and eternal bliss. Hence the Religion of Saints teaches that such a valuable body should not be uselessly wasted.

Kabir Sahab says —

कहता हूँ कह जात हूँ कहा बजाऊँ ढोल ।
स्वाँसा खाली जात है तीन लोक का मोल ॥
कबीर सोता क्या करे जागन से कर चौप ।
यह दम हीरा लाल है गिन गिन गुरु को सौंप ॥

Kahtā hūn kah jāt hūn kahā bajāūn dhōl,
Swānsā khālī jāt hai teen lōk kā mōl.
Kabir sōtā kyā kare jāgan se kar chaunp,
Yeh dam hīrā lāl hai gin gin guru kō saunp.

Translation —

I have often said and will go on saying till I leave the world, that human breath[1] (i.e. moments of human life) which is as valuable as all the three *Lokas* (worlds) is not being used to any purpose. Is it necessary to say this by beat of drums ? Your neglect will serve no purpose, you should therefore wake up. This your breath is as precious as gems and should be utilized in the service of the Satguru.

Admitted that a man may not be very rich nor a capitalist and admitted further that he may wear coarse clothes and pass his days on unbuttered dry bread but it should be remembered that the inner blessings of the human body are

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1 An old though crude belief has persisted in India that a man's life has a limited number of breaths and that he dies when this number is exhausted Here on the background of this belief, it is suggested that man should make the best possible use of his breaths.

all fully available to him. Hence the teaching of the Religion of Saints is—"O humble and poor devotee! do not get disheartened. It is possible that the world may have a low opinion about you because you earn only a few chips by your hard labour and live on that earning (which is honest and legitimate) but it is highly praiseworthy from the point of view of *paramartha*. That person alone who lives on his honest income earned by hard labour, can control his mind and can awaken his faculties and *chakras* lying hidden in the body. Certainly, worldly enjoyments give special pleasure to man but this bears no comparison to the joy and bliss which one gets on turning his attention inwards. Be a little courageous, learn the methods of *Sumiran* (Repetition of the Holy Name) and *Dhyan* (Contemplation of the Holy Form) and turn your attention inwards. There are two paths in your body (*ghat*), one leading towards hell and the other towards *Satyalok* (the true region). Leave aside worldly considerations and the taunts of fools and enquire about the secrets of these paths You imitate others and in vain run after worldly objects in search of pleasure and get worried. Within you there exists the source of all pleasures. You should wake up and turn inwards.

बड़ा ज़ुल्म है मेरे यार यह,
　　　　कि तू जाय सैर को बाग़ के,
तू कमल से आप ही कम नहीं,
　　　　हिये में उलट के चमन में आ।

Barā zulm hai mere yār yeh,
　　　　ki tū jāye sair kō bāgh ke,
Tū kamal se āp hī kam nahīn,
　　　　Hiye men ulat ke chaman men ā.

Translation —

It is a pity, my friend, that
　thou goest for a stroll in the garden.
Thou art thyself in no way less than an unblossomed lotus[1],
　Turn attention inwards and enter the garden within you.

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1. Man goes to a garden to see flowers etc The suggestion is that devotee's own spirit has the potentialities of blossoming forth into a 'flower', of course, spiritually.

DISCOURSE 28

HOW SHOULD WE TREAT THOSE WHO CALUMNIATE US?

If we read the accounts of the lives of *Sadhs*, Saints or *Mahatmas* and holy persons, it would appear that though those Sages led a very simple life and devoted most of their time in making efforts for the welfare of mankind, there were always many people who found hundreds of faults in the mode of life of those holy persons and their benevolent work. Not only this, but even now thousands of envious people find scores of faults in their pure mode of life and their noble teachings and thereby satisfy their own hearts even though those Great Personalities are no longer in the world and do no harm to anybody. For example, thousands of Qureshis for a long time continued to speak ill of Prophet Mohammed and thousands of non-Muslims still speak ill about the holy life and conduct of the Prophet. In the same way many people irresponsibly speak whatever they like about Guru Nanak and Kabir Sahab. Hence, it would be no wonder if one hears people speaking ill of and using undignified language about Merciful Radhasoami and the Radhasoami Faith It is needless to speak about others, when even some of our own people who have neither any sense of responsibility nor the ability to understand important matters, find fault with everything concerning *Satsang* simply because they got annoyed for some reason and thus not only do they deprive themselves of the benefits of *Satsang* and opportunities for *Seva* but also keep away, by propagating their poisonous thoughts, their friends, relations and members of their family from the noble teachings of true *paramartha* Can any help be rendered to these mistaken brothers in any way? Of course they can certainly be helped and in more than one way. First, whenever we may meet these brothers, we should behave with them politely and bear their harsh and improper

words cheerfully and explain to them the real teachings of *Satsang* Secondly, we should pray for them in the Holy Feet of the true Supreme Being now and then so that they may be able to give up their wrong notions and gain right understanding. Thirdly, we should never think of taking any revenge on them nor on getting annoyed with them should ever think of doing them any harm, on the other hand, we should control ourselves, keeping in mind the words of Lord Christ 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." When we get angry with somebody, our minds get unusually excited and generally speaking our mind becomes unfit for internal practices and again poisonous thoughts of taking revenge fill our minds. If we do not properly control our minds on such occasions, not only would our progress in *paramartha* be impeded but it is also possible that some improper act may be committed by us and this may become a source of trouble to us for a long time. Hence it would be wise for us not to get angry at the words of any person who calumniates us.

गाली ही से ऊपजे कलह कष्ट और मीच
हार चले सो संत है लाग मरे सो नीच ।
गाली आवत एक है उलटत होय अनेक,
कहैं कबीर न उलटिये वाही एक की एक ।

Gālī hī se ūpje kalah kasht aur mīch
Hār chale sō sant hai lāg mare sō nīch.
Gālī āwat ek hai ultat hōye anek,
Kahen Kabir na ulatiye wāhī ek kī ek.

Translation —

Abuse leads to quarrel, trouble and ultimately, death,
He who accepts defeat is a Saint ;
he who contests it is mean.
Abuse when resorted to by one is only one,
retorted, it leads to many others.
Kabir advises never to return it,
so that abuse may not multiply.

DISCOURSE 29

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE OF SALVATION

One often asks, "How has the state of salvation been described in the Religion of Saints ?"

As the state of salvation is something beyond the reach of the senses and the human intellect, it is not only very difficult but impossible to describe it in words commonly used. Things, which are not in the experience of ordinary men, are generally described by giving ordinary examples of things which are in common experience and which resemble them. For example, 'nectar' is described by saying that it is as white as milk, as cool as ice, as sweet as sugar and as liquid as water. In the same manner, the state of salvation is described by making a mention of the state of pure and deep joy and bliss experienced in human life but obviously, a description of this nature is wholly incomplete. The Religion of Saints teaches that there is a spiritual essence in every animate being and it is called *Surat*, soul or *Atma* or spirit. In the present circumstances, i e while living in the world, the spirit is connected with the mind and the body and both these function with the help of the vitality obtained from the spirit and as an electro magnet, which itself has no magnetic power, develops a powerful magnetic force when electric current passes through it, in the same manner, the mind (which is lifeless) begins to function on coming into contact with the spirit current and egotism, desire, passion, anger etc. make their appearance. This is the condition which is popularly known as the state of consciousness and the functions noticed in this state are considered to be the functions of the spirit but in reality it is the consciousness of the *Jivatma*[1] and the functions during this state are all the work of

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1 Vide Note 1 on page 21 on Jīvātmā. As explained, this condition comes into existence when matter (Jara) i.e mind co-exists with spirit (Chetan) i.e. Ātman. This is why it is called 'Jara-chetan' in Hindi.

the mind. The *Śakti* that functions in this condition, i.e. the faculty which is awakened within the mind on its contact with the spirit current is called by the Saints and other religious Leaders as *Jivatma* or *Jiva*. Thus the knowledge which ordinary persons gain or the pleasure or pain which they experience has nothing to do with spiritual knowledge but it is all the knowledge of *Jivatma*. If the knowledge which appears on suspending the entire activities of this *Śakti* or *Jivatma* (which activity has been described by Sage Patanjali as *nirodh* i.e. suspension of *chitta vrittis* i.e. the *vrittis* of the mind) and on developing the consciousness of the pure spiritual plane i.e. of the plane which is beyond the reach of *Jivatma*, can be experienced even for a moment, a man can to a certain extent form a correct conception of the state of salvation. True salvation is achieved only when the spirit i.e. *Atma*, free from the meshes of body and mind, enters the pure spiritual state attainable only in the Region, beyond the spheres pertaining to the body and the mind, called in the Radhasoami Faith as the Abode of the True Creator or the Region of Radhasoami. On this plane or in this Region nothing except pure spiritual essence can find place.

जैसे नाला जब तलक बहता रहे।
सब कोई नाले को नाला ही कहे॥
और जब दरिया से नाला जा मिला।
हो गया दरिया नहीं नाला रहा॥

Jaise nālā jab talak bahtā rahe,
Sab kōyee nāle kō nālā hī kahe.
Aur jab dariyā se nālā jā milā,
Hō gayā dariyā nahīn nālā rahā

Translation —

So long as a torrent flows by itself, all call it only a torrent. When the torrent joins the river, it becomes the river itself and is no more a torrent.

The spirit on entering that sphere, merges in the Highest

Being i.e the true Supreme Being and becomes one with Him. It then functions in its own attributes, which are self-existence, all-intelligence, all-bliss and light. This very thing has been mentioned in the *Mundaka Upanishad* in the following lines—

यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रेऽस्तं गच्छन्ति नामरूपे विहाय ।
तथा विद्वान् नामरूपाद्विमुक्तः परात् परम् पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥

Yathā nadyah syandamānāh samudre'stam gachchhanti nāmarūpe vihāya,
Tathā vidvān nāmarūpād vimuktah Parāt-param Purushamupaiti divyam

Translation—

Just as rivers on entering the sea lose their names and form i.e. their identity, so the seer, i.e. one who has the knowledge of *Brahma* and is not tied down by name and form, merges into the Resplendent Being Who is beyond everything else.

DISCOURSE 30

METHODS FOR THE PURIFICATION OF THE MIND

Some people say that as long as they lived a life free of all restraint and only talked about *paramartha* and made no efforts in that direction, their mind appeared to be quite clean and pure, but since the time they started making systematic efforts to subdue the mind and the senses, they have been feeling that their mind is full of impure and filthy desires and that whenever efforts are made to quieten it, it becomes as restive as the colt which shows extraordinary fickle-ness when a hand is placed on its back and on such occasions they often think of giving up the practice or of lying down. Some ignorant persons on seeing this condition of their mind begin to entertain doubts about the efficacy of the methods of practice and some fools give up the practices altogether and

again begin to follow the vagaries of their mind. It should be understood that obstacles (*Vighnas*) of this kind are created by the mind not only during the practice of *Surat Śabda Yoga* but Sage Patanjali has also mentioned these obstacles in detail in his *Yoga Sutras* which shows that a person practising the *Ashtanga Yoga*[1] also had to face these same obstacles. The truth is that so long as the mind is impure, no one can perform the *Yoga* practices with success. Hence every person who has sincere desire to do devotional practices should make efforts to achieve purity of mind. How is this purity of mind to be achieved ? An ordinary man would say that purity of mind can be attained by speaking truth, but this reply is not sufficient No doubt, a feeling of peace and some purity is engendered in the mind if we speak truth, but the *samskaras* of the present and the past lives and attractions of worldly objects and strong feelings of passion, anger etc. of our own minds and the minds of our associates do also exert their influence on the mind. We cannot save ourselves from their pernicious influence merely by taking a vow to speak the truth. Just as after a water bath, the body remains clean and cool for a short time, in the same way, the mind achieves peace and purity for a short time only by speaking the truth and soon thereafter it gets impure as before The first method to gain purity of mind is to feel sincerely repentant, the second is to engender feelings of devotion and love within the mind, the third is to direct the attention inwards on to a higher plane and to fix it there and the fourth is to secure the grace and favour of the true Supreme Being or the *Satguru*. It is only when we begin to accept our mistakes as mistakes,

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1 The Yōga system of Patanjali is also known as Ashtānga Yōga, because it has ashta (eight) angas (parts), viz, Yama (five rules of self-restraint), niyama (other five rules of self-restraint, mostly mental), āsana (prescribed posture), prānāyāma (breath-control), pratyāhāra (withdrawal of senses from external objects), dhāranā (concentration of attention internally on something), dhyāna (the union of the spirit with object concentrated upon) and samādhi (the state when the spirit becomes one with the Object of Devotion and loses its self-consciousness).

that we have a feeling of repentance within our mind. In other words, it is only when our mind begins to function honestly that we are able to take note of our weaknesses Every devoted *paramarthi*[1], when once he sees his weaknesses, should feel remorse and have feelings of repentance for his mistakes and weaknesses The defective elements get eliminated out of the mind when feelings of true repentance are engendered, just as juice is squeezed out of a lemon. Purity of mind can be achieved by creating feelings of devotion and fervour just as acidity is removed from an acid by adding alkali to it. The mind gains purity if the attention is directed to some higher plane in the same manner as a person suffering from pain, on going to sleep, forgets pain and gets pleasant experiences in dream, i.e the inclination of the mind towards its lower propensities disappears on concentration of attention at some higher plane Mercy of the true Supreme Being or the true Guru purifies the mind just as a heavy shower washes clean all the trees and cleanses the ground. Devotees should adopt any of these methods whichever they think they would be able to apply at any particular occasion and derive benefit therefrom.

Some persons of antiquated ideas hope to obtain purity of the mind by a bath in the *Ganges* or the *Yamuna* and other rivers. First, the body experiences a feeling of coolness on having a dip in flowing water which, particularly in summer, is very pleasant. Sometime after bath a reaction sets in inside the body and the bather experiences a pleasant sensation of warmth or glow in his body. Feeling happy over these experiences, ignorant people believe that their sins are washed away by a bath in the river and their mind is purified. The devotees should beware of this wrong notion.

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1. Vide Note 1 on page 23 for 'paramārtha' One who tries to achieve this 'paramārtha' or is engaged in activities which are helpful in attaining the ideal of 'paramārtha', is called a 'paramārthī'.

DISCOURSE 31

MERIT IS REQUIRED FOR BECOMING A TRUE PHILANTHROPIST

People are often heard saying that the present is not the time for sitting in a corner and meditating or performing spiritual practices but that the need of the hour is philanthropic work and service of the country and it is through these only that high spiritual status can be attained and human life can be made fruitful. Evidently, these views of the people are based on ignorance No doubt, philanthropic work and service of the country are good activities but it should be clearly understood that true philanthropy is not within the competence of everybody. Real philanthropic work can be done only by that person who has got no purpose of his own to serve and who is fully competent to benefit others. If the philanthropists of these days are examined keeping this ideal in view, it can be easily ascertained how many of them are true philanthropists and how many have adopted philanthropic work as a means of earning livelihood.

It needs no mention that it is really very difficult to be altogether unselfish. Only two kinds of men can be truly unselfish: first, those whose worldly needs have all been fulfilled and secondly, those who have become indifferent towards worldly possessions, i e either those who have got all worldly things or those who do not care at all for worldly possessions Obviously, not a single person can be found in the whole world who has got all worldly possessions. Great kings and emperors are burning in the fire of greed. A man may become free from needs of an ordinary kind by becoming rich or if he is a king or an emperor, but it does not mean that all his needs are then fulfilled. On the contrary, he generally becomes more and more greedy. A powerful emperor like Akbar whose wealth

and riches were boundless and who had hundreds of elephants in his stables, on hearing the praise of an elephant named Ram Prasad belonging to another king, became extremely impatient and sacrificed thousands of lives and lacs of rupees for securing the said elephant Similarly, Maharaja Ranjit Singh[1] started a war just to grab a mare from the Governor of Peshawar and Kaiser William, not satisfied with his sovereignty over Germany, started a war with the whole world. Thus it would not be improper to say that in the whole world there is not a single person all of whose desires have been fulfilled.

Likewise, persons who do not care at all for worldly possessions would not be many. This wealth of contentment falls to the lot of only those devotees who have experienced spiritual bliss Just as a man throws away jaggery on getting sugar candy, in the same manner a devoted *paramarthi* turns his face away from worldly enjoyments on gaining spiritual bliss, for spiritual bliss can be obtained only by a person who has controlled his mind and senses and has been able to concentrate his attention inwards Thus only those persons who have made efforts for the subjugation of their mind and senses and have performed the practices for concentration of attention inwards for a long time do not care for worldly possessions If these statements are correct, it would not be difficult to conclude that it is not possible for everybody to be truly unselfish.

Now remains the question of the competence for doing philanthropic work. This also is not an easy matter to decide about. For example, quite a large number of people are engaged in efforts to achieve *Swarajya*[2]. We can concede that they

1 A Sikh Ruler of the Punjab (India) He was born in 1780 and died in 1839. By 1823 he had succeeded in establishing a strong Sikh kingdom in the Punjab 2 The term 'Swarājya' literally means 'Self-government'. It was commonly used by people engaged in the Non-cooperation Movement in India for India's independence

sincerely believe that their country would be immensely benefitted when *Swarajya* is achieved but the question is how many people out of these deserve to have *Swarajya*. Many men although they have no definite proposals nor any experience are busy in guiding others If a person wants to render medical aid to poor and sick people, he must first acquire thorough knowledge of the Medical Science. It is no philanthrophy to commence treating the sick without acquiring that knowledge. On the contrary, it looks like killing the sick and exhibiting one's own folly. Thus our idea that true philanthropic work is not within the competence of every man is not incorrect

One may enquire whether supplying of food to the hungry and water to the thirsty is not philanthropic work ? Is it not philanthropic work to open hospitals, schools and colleges for the poor ?

The answer is that all these activities relate to philanthropic work but the carrying out of all these activities is philanthropic work of only a low order. These activities are of a low order in the sense that they are not such that their performance would confer on any one high spiritual status, or that for their sake the practices of *dhyan*[1] and *bhajan*[2] or internal practices could be either given up or postponed. Our birth as a man can be really fruitful only when we are able to get a vision of the true Spreme Being. This blessing cannot be secured by giving alms or charity or by the opening of hospitals, schools and colleges. The protection of the true Sant Satguru and performance of internal practices alone can secure this blessing for us.

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1. Vide Note 2 on page 32 2 Vide Note 3 on page 32.

DISCOURSE 32

IT IS NOT SUFFICIENT ONLY TO HONOUR HOLY BOOKS. THEIR TEACHINGS SHOULD ALSO BE ACTED UPON

No object of the world is good or bad in itself. When a man determines the purpose or fixes upon the objective in view, the objects of the world are said to be good or bad in relation to that objective. In other words, objects which conform to that objective or are helpful in achieving that objective, are called good and those which are not such, are called bad. For example, if at any time we wish to bathe, a shower of rain at that time would be considered good and if at any time we hate taking a bath or wish to avoid it, rainfall would appear to be bad at that time. Accordingly, if a learned man writes a book with the intention that his friends and associates who might receive that book may become acquainted with the knowledge contained therein and derive benefit from it and his friends and associates on receiving the book wrap it up in a silk handkerchief and begin to worship it instead of reading and understanding it, then no doubt this action of theirs would not be bad or objectionable in itself but it would be entirely against the wishes of the writer and from his point of view at least would be bad and objectionable. If this idea of ours is correct, it would not be wrong to say that the religious societies which believe in books revealed by God or inspired holy books are duty-bound, in addition to honouring them, to make efforts to derive that benefit from those books for which *Iśvara*[1], *Khuda*[2], or Deity gave out the holy knowledge or teachings contained in the books of that society. Those who do not act as above, act against the wishes of their *Iśvara*, *Khuda* or Deity. It is thus the duty of all

1. Hindus use the word 'Iśvara' for God 2 Mohammedans generally use the word 'Khudā' for God.

persons whether Hindus, Muslims, Christians or the followers of the Religion of Saints that they should carefully study the *Vedas*, the *Quran*, the Bible and the *Bani*[1] of the Saints and should not rest till they are able to understand the true meaning and when they understand them, they should, like true devotees, act on the teachings of the holy books Unless a person acts on this principle, his condition is not better than that of an ignorant thirsty person, who even after reaching a well dies crying for water. He would never derive true benefit from his religion and his assumption of the human body and joining a religion would to all intents and purposes be meaningless.

If this principle is accepted as correct, it becomes the duty of these people to search in their society for a person who knows the true meanings of these holy books, so that by association with him their heart's desire may be fulfilled. There is no doubt that there are innumerable *Pandits*[2], *Maulvis*[3], clergymen and *Granthis*[4] in the world but the difficulty is they do not agree in explaining the contents of these books or in commenting on them. There are hundreds of sects of every religion and there are learned men and *Pandits* in every sect who interpret them differently. The holy book is one but its commentaries are innumerable and different. One can't decide what one has to do. In our opinion, there is only one remedy for this and it is that an ardent devotee should look for an *Abhyasi*[5] person in his society and ignore those who are merely learned persons i e those who merely talk

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1 The word 'Bānī' is used collectively generally for the religious literature produced by the Saints of India or by any one of the Saints 2 A learned Hindu who has studied Hindu religious literature 3. A Muslim divine conversant with Islamic literature 4. A Sikh who is fully conversant with the Holy Granth of the Sikhs 5 One who has acquired knowledge of spiritual matters by performing spiritual practices and gaining spiritual experiences and knowledge Abhyāsa means practice and spiritual practices are generally spoken of as 'Abhyāsa' 'Abhyāsī' is one who has done Abhyāsa.

and after his enquiry, should become the disciple of the person about whom he is sure that he does not rely on grammar and dictionary but has dived deep within himself and has gained some spiritual experience himself. During the period of enquiry the devotee should not spare in the least the person about whom he may be enquiring but when once he is quite satisfied, he should behave like a true devotee or servant and on learning the practices from that holy person should himself commence internal practice or *Abhyasa* and thus by and by should himself become an *Abhyasi* person. Here advice for searching an *Abhyasi* person has been given, because the true meanings of any holy book can be understood only by that person who has got the capacity and talent to understand it The competence and ability required for forming a correct conception of spiritual matters and the science of realizing the Supreme Being need no explanation. Any person who has not purified his mind and made it quite calm nor has gained any experience of some spiritual plane or spiritual knowledge, cannot under any circumstances understand or explain the science of realizing God.

DISCOURSE 33

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REAL AND FALSE RENUNCIATION

Much importance is attached in the world to outward renunciation. The person who keeps most of his body naked and uses rough clothing or a blanket for covering himself and keeps his hair, moustache and beard long and dishevelled, is taken to be a great hermit and the greatness of the person who keeps harping on his renunciation off and on and refuses to touch money, is beyond all measure. Do all these persons who wander about in such make-ups and frequently mix with families and satisfy their needs through them, look upon worldly enjoyments with contempt or indifference ? As a

matter of fact, with the exception of a special few, such persons adopt this farce as a means of livelihood because they well understand that on seeing these outward symbols of renunciation family men are very eager to serve such people as they consider it their rare good fortune to serve by spending money in satisfying their needs. It should be clearly understood that only that renunciation and detachment (Vairāgya[1]) is true and beneficial which springs from the heart. If there is any attachment or desire for worldly objects in a man's heart, such outward renunciation and detachment is nothing but fraud. Hafiz[2] has expressed it well —

حافظا مئے خور و رندی کن و خوش باش ولے
دام تزویر مکن چون دگران قرآن را

Hắfizā mai khurō rindī kun va khushbāsh vale,
Dāme tazvīr makun chūn digrān Qurān rā.

Translation —

You may take wine, conduct yourself without restraint and enjoy life, but do not spread the net of fraud like others who, though carrying the Holy Quran in their hand, do so.

It is possible that a person may be able to make fifty to hundred people as his followers by this kind of fraud, obtain *seva* and personal service from them and pass his days in comfort but such a person would never be fit to tread the path of true *paramartha*.

Some people say that it is a great sin to touch money and that devotees should therefore never touch silver and gold. The question is what is sinful in this ? For a man of true renunciation gold, silver and earth are all alike, as all the three are extracted from the same source and are equally useful. Have iron, bronze and brass been created by one God and gold

1. Vide Note 1 on page 19. 2. Shams-ud-Dīn Mahommed, known by his *nom de plume* of Hafiz was a famous Sufi mystic and poet of Persia He lived in the 14th Century A. D. As he was born and lived mostly at Shirāz, he is known as Hafiz Shirazi.

and silver by another ? Are not all the metals made available to man under the scheme of the same Creator and from the same earth ? Now consider what are rupees and pies ? These are merely pieces of silver and copper on which particular types of inscriptions are engraved and are given or received as price in course of purchase or sale of goods under the authority of the Government which has issued them. If an arrangement of this kind did not exist, it would have been impossible for the people to trade on a large scale and even in trading on a small scale there would have been serious difficulties. For example, if you desired to purchase cloth, then according to the usage and arrangement of ancient times, you would have been obliged to carry two to four maunds of grain on your head to the shop of a cloth-dealer and there would have been piles of cloth in one corner and heaps of different kinds of grain in the other portion of the shop. It can be imagined how many cart-loads of grain must one have carried to a motor dealer's shop if he desired to purchase a motor car and the shop of the motor dealer would not have appeared anyway smaller than a grain-market in size. It is clear that the system of using coins was established to facilitate the sale and purchase of goods. In other words, the purpose which cattle and heaps of grain served in the remote past is now served by the pieces of metals. If this is correct, then the question arises whether the hermit of the ancient times avoided keeping or cattle touching grain ? The reply is quite simple, viz, that all Brahmans and *Rishis* kept cattle and received from kings both cows and grain as gifts and reward. It should be plain after considering over all this that there is no harm in touching money. However, as purchases of all kinds of good and bad articles can be easily made with money, everybody naturally has a great desire and attachment for it. Devotees of religion should not allow the virus of the attachment for money to enter their heart and should make proper and legitimate use of money which they earn rightly and honestly by hard work and should not entertain any desire to amass wealth.

DISCOURSE 34

DHARMA ŚASTRAS[1] AND THE SHARI'AT[2]

When there is a wild hue and cry in every part of the world for change and progress, in India there is a cry for bringing back the ages when *Dharma Śastras* and *Shari'at* held the sway. Those who want to organize the Hindus are dreaming of the past ages and the conditions obtaining at the time of *Maryada Purushottama*[3] Ram Chandra and those who want to organize the Muslims, recall the tales and episodes of fourteen hundred years' old Arabia Nobody asserts that the teachings contained in the *Dharma Śastras* or the customs and usages which were current in the past ages in India or the law of *Shari'at* which was promulgated in Arabic in the early days of *Islam* are all wrong or harmful but what is said is that it would not be right to follow word by word the rules framed by ancient sages according to the needs of their times and the circumstances then prevailing, now that the world has completely changed and Hindus and Muslims alike are leading their lives in entirely new circumstances. Hence it would be wholly wrong for Hindu brethren to expect that the Vedic age would come back because even if that age again reappears the majority of Hindus would not at all

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1. The word 'Śāstra' stands for teachings or treatise, religious or other. The word 'Dharma Śāstra' however refers to Codes of Law, containing rules of conduct, social, religious etc. 'Smritis' e.g Manu Smṛiti is such a Dharma Śāstra 2. There have been two schools among Muslims, viz, the 'Sharī'at' and 'Tarīqat'. The 'Sharī'at' contains rules of conduct as prescribed by authority for guidance of Muslims, while Tarīqat ignores these and enjoins upon man to develop love for the Supreme Being etc etc. 3. The word 'Purushōttama' means 'the most excellent being' In this sense, the word has been used for incarnations of Brahma and Para-Brahma i e Rama and Krishna. 'Maryādā' means 'the standard of right conduct' observed. The title 'Maryādā Purushōttama' was used for Rama as He always observed all rules of propriety and social conduct in the strictest sense.

like it. It has been thoroughly impressed on the minds of the Hindu masses through the teachings of Mahātmā Buddha, Kabir Sahab, Nanak Sahab and other Great Personalities that the sacrifice of dumb animals to atone for one's sins is totally wrong and improper from the point of view of true religious life. If kings and the rich people were to marry hundreds of wives and the custom of marriage of the times before *Uddalaḳa*[1] *Rishi* or of the *Pandavas*[2] were revived, it would never be tolerated by the majority of people as it is opposed to the present-day ideals of morality and civilization. Thus the only thing proper for the Hindus is to adopt as much of the teachings of *Rishis*[3] and *Munis*[4] as is useful for the present-day needs and to leave the rest. Similarly, Muslim brothers should also act in the same way as regards the rules of *Shari'at.* Those who have read *Darbare-Aḳbari*[5] written by Maulana Azad[6], know very well how the *Mullahs*[7] by laying stress on strict observance of *Shari'at* gave a lot of trouble to Emperor Akbar but that wise Emperor had foreseen the craftiness of the selfish people and therefore decided to crush their power for ever. The *Mullahs* also obtained the help of learned men of Persia and Afghanistan and resolved to dethrone Akbar, but fortunately Abul Fazal and Sheikh Mubarak came to the aid of Emperor Akbar with the result that *Mullahs* had to suffer defeat and Emperor Akbar was enabled to interpret the rules of *Shari'at* according to his own conception. It can be visualised what would have been

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1. A sage of the Vedic period 2. Sons of Pāndu, whose war with the Kauravas is the subject matter of the great Sanskrit Epic Mahābhārata. The Pāṇḍavas were five brothers and had 'Draupadī' as their common wife. 3. The word Rishi is said to have been derived from the Sanskrit verb rish (ऋष्)—'to go', i e. one who has gone beyond this world. Or perhaps from ṛiś (driś-to see) i e one who sees, a seer The word 'ऋषि' also means 'a ray of light'. 4. 'Muni' is from the Sanskrit verb मन् (man), 'to think', a thinker, but the word also indicates 'one who is inspired'. 5. Name of book dealing with Court of Akbar the Great, Moghul Emperor (1556-1605) of India. 6 A modern scholar and writer of repute He is now (1956) Education Minister of India. 7. Muslim divines.

the fate of Akbar's rule and the kingdom of India if Akbar had yielded to the narrow-minded *Mullahs*. Take a recent example. Turkey which was the stronghold of the Caliphate[1] wiped off that ancient institution all at once and the system of marriages and the *Purdah* which had been prevalent for generations were abolished in no time. It is a matter of surprise that nobody ever questions the open opposition of the Turks to the rules of the *Shari'at* and on the contrary every one praises these actions of Kemal Pasha[2]. If Hindu and Muslim brothers set aside all prejudices and begin to interpret *Dharma Śastras* and the *Shari'at* according to the needs and circumstances of the present times, it is not impossible that both the communities would not only begin to live like brethren but would be enabled to live truly religious lives according to the spirit of the teachings of the *Rishis* and the Prophet.

DISCOURSE 35

HOW CAN THE MISERIES OF THE WORLD END?

Hafiz[3] has said in one[4] of his poems :—

What is this row in the world ? The whole world is full of broils. Brother has no affection for his brother and father has no love for his son. Every person expects that the times would improve and there would be progress and prosperity but the difficulty is that conditions are worsening day by day. Daughters are fighting their mothers and sons are ill-wishers

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1. Just as there is a Pope for Christians in Rome, so there was a Caliph for Muslims at Constantinople. 2. A Dictator of Turkey who put an end to the Caliphate and abolished all orthodox Muslim laws and modernized Turkey Kemal Pasha became President of Turkey, which had become a Republic, in 1923. 3. Vide Note 2 on page 106 4. The Persian text of the poem and its Roman version are given at the end of this Discourse.

of their fathers. Fools enjoy syrups of rose and honey and those who possess talent pass their days in starvation None should expect any improvement of conditions in the world as here each new day is worse than the previous one. Such are the conditions here in this world that costly Arab horses are loaded like donkeys and are wounded badly and frequently and the necks of donkeys are decorated with gold necklaces. Listen to the advice of Hafiz, Oh Khwaja, and do good to others as far as possible. (This alone would do good to thee). This advice is more precious than even valuable jewels."

If one reflects on the subject of this poem, it would appear that the dissensions and quarrels noticed in the present age are nothing new In the time of *Hafiz* too, i e. at least six hundred years earlier, the condition of the world was as it is to-day. Besides this,the study of ancient books like *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* also leads us to the same conclusion that quarrels, fights, greed, covetousness, jealousy and rivalry had their sway in this world in the past also. According to the story of the Bible, evil tendencies existed in the world since the beginning of the creation, because Cain, son of Adam, killed his brother Abel under the influence of these evil tendencies. It is possible that the stories referred to above may not be true word by word, but they at least go to show that men of good temperament and good conduct have always complained against mischievous people. It is no wonder therefore if in the present age also complaints are heard against people of that kind in various countries, nations and societies. The real cause of quarrels and dissentions is as expressed in the Persian saying 'یک انار و سد بیمار' (Yak anār va sad bīmār) i e. there is "one pomegranate and hundred sick persons desirous of it". In other words, the number of articles which people covet in the world is limited, but the claimants for them are many and thus there is always tussle and tug of war between the claimants. History tells us that all the wars that have been fought so far were all for acquisition of territory, wealth or

women. The cause of the wars of Kurukshetra[1] and Lanka[2], attacks by Mahmud Ghaznavi[3], bloodshed and massacres by Allauddin[4], wars and conquests of Emperor Babar[5], the invasions of Akbar[6] and Aurangzeb[7], bloody fights of Shivaji[8] and battles of the Sikhs was one or other of these three. One need not go so far back. Take the case of the European War (1914-19), for example. Germany had covetted for a long time the rich territory of France as it had numerous mines of coal, iron and other metals etc. Germany, on finding a pretext, took possession of it after the war of 1870[9]. It was evident that France could not sit quiet after losing such a valuable territory. So after the war of 1914, France again took possession of it. The mental condition of the leaders of Germany after losing the province can easily be imagined. Thus on considering the cause for every war, we find that it is always one or the other of the three aforesaid causes The causes which lead to wars between countries and nations, also lead to internal dissensions and bickerings within various societies. For example, there are only two offices in every society, one of the President and the other of the Secretary, but many members of the society become aspirants for these offices. For some time the fire of jealousy smoulders unnoticed within their hearts but when opportunity comes, it flares up and assumes a formidable form. To save their country from destructive activities of this kind, some statesmen of England introduced the system of election by majority vote. Gradually

1. Refers to the war between the Kauravas and Pāndavas which is the subject matter of Mahābhārata, the great Epic poem in Sanskrit. 2 Refers to the war between Rāma and Rāvana. 'Lankā' is the old name of Ceylon 3. Mahmud Ghaznavi led a number of attacks into India, mainly for plundering temples etc He was king of Ghazni (Afghanistan) from 997-1021 A. D. 4. A Turkish Sultan of India (1296-1320 A. D). He tried to establish his rule over the whole of India 5 Founder of the famous Moghul Empire in India. He ruled India from 1526-1530. 6 Akbar the Great (1556-1605), the Greatest Moghul Emperor of India 7 The last great Moghul Emperor (1658-1707) of India. 8. Founder of the Mahratta kingdom in India (1627-1680) 9. Franco-German War.

this method spread to all other countries as well. But the underhand dealings and tactics adopted these days for securing a majority and the exposure of their secrets and the rise of persons unfit for leadership to high offices by those means and the misery and ruin which thus fall to the lot of the society have brought the politicians of the world to their wit's end and they are now at a loss to understand how to get rid of this new calamity. Some lay stress on the Monroe Doctrine[1], some point towards the ways of Mussolini, some extol the methods of Kemal Pasha, some invite attention towards the ancient teachings of *Rishis*, some expect improvement through the spinning wheel[2] and some hope to cure all the ills of the world through the majority vote in the councils. The ordinary man feels at a loss to decide which way to turn. He feels perplexed and can't decide how to move forward or how to stay where he is. Some say that time has now arrived when a great personality possessing extraordinary capacity should make his advent from higher regions and rid the world of the present-day evils and make it possible for man to live his life peacefully. To tell the truth, all these troubles of the world would come to end only when a desirable change in the outlook of various nations and countries takes place and when they begin to attach more value to the bliss one can get in the Feet of the True Supreme Being than to the fleeting and insignificant enjoyments of the world That bliss is unfathomed and unbounded. Those who seek it have not to undergo the troubles arising from the problem of "one pomegranate for a hundred sick persons".

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1. President Monroe of America laid down in 1823 the principle that no European country would be allowed to establish new colonies or to interfere in the internal or inter-state affairs of the countries of North and South America. This came to be known as the Monroe Doctrine.

2 Mahatma Gandhi stressed that the people should spin yarn and use cloth made of such yarn. The spinning wheel was adopted as a symbol in the Indian Independence Movement.

The Persian text of the poem of Hafiz Shirazi referred to on page 110 (Vide Note 4 on that page) is given here below together with its Roman transcription:—

این چه سوریست که در دور قمر می بینم
همه آفاق پر از فتنه و سر می بینم ۱
هر کسے روز بهی می طلبد از ایام
مشکل اینست که هر روز بترمی بینم ۲
ابلهان را همه سربت ز گلاب و قند ست
قوت دانا همه از حون جگر می دبنم ۳
اسپ تازی شده مجروح بزیر پالان
طوق زرین همه در گردن حر می بینم ۴
دختران را همه جنگ ست و جدل با مادر
پسران را همه بدخواه پدر می بینم ۵
هیچ رحمے نه برادر به برادر دارد
هیچ شفقت نه پدر را به پسر می بینم ۶
پند حافظ بشنو خاجه برو نیکی کن
زانکه این پند به از در و گوهر می بینم ۷

Īn che shōrest ke dar daure qamar mī bīnam
Hamā āfāq pur az fitna ō shar mī bīnam. 1

Har kase rōz-i-bihī mī talbad az ayyām,
Mushkil īnast ke har rōz battar mī bīnam 2

Ablihān rā hamā sharbat ze gulāb-ō-qand ast,
Quvvate dānā hamā az khūnejigar mī bīnam. 3

Asp tazī shudah majrūh ba zere pālān
Tauqe zarīn hamā dar gardane khar mī bīnam. 4

Dukhtarān rā hamā jangast ō jadal bā mādar,
Pisarān rā hamā badkhwāh-i-pidar mī bīnam. 5

Hech rahme na brādar ba brādar dārad,
Hech shafqat na pidar rā ba pisar mī bīnam 6

Pand-i-Hāfiz bishnau khājā birau nekī kun,
Zān ki īn pand beh az durr-o-gauhar mī bīnam 7

DISCOURSE 36

WHY IS IT NECESSARY TO HAVE FIXED TIME FOR INTERNAL PRACTICES?

A devotee has asked —"What is the proper time for internal practices ?" Hindus perform their *sandhya* twice or thrice daily. Muslims say their prayers five times a day. In the same manner, Christians have their mass at fixed hours and count the beads of their rosary and Sikhs read specific portions of their *Bani* every morning and evening. Hence the question arises whether it is essential to fix special hours for remembering God ?

The reply is that morning time is the most suitable time for internal practices because the atmosphere is generally quiet at that time and the body is free from fatigue, having rested for the whole night and remained quiet. The stomach is also light as the food is digested by then and the mind after sufficient rest is free from recollections of worldly entanglements. It does not however mean that internal practices should not be done at any other time. As the spiritual practices are performed with the object of producing a special kind of internal condition and the effect of worldly affairs generally makes our minds and bodies unfit for the achievement of that condition, we naturally become fit, at least to some extent, for performing internal practices due to our detachment from the world for five to seven hours at night. However, if a person keeps control over his mind and attention while attending to all his duties during the day and moved by feelings of love and devotion occasionally turns his attention inwards, he can pass the whole day in internal practices. It is necessary to fix time in the beginning to habituate oneself and it is also beneficial to sit for internal practices at fixed hours to escape disturbance caused by worldly affairs and weaknesses of the mind but it should also

be remembered that the True Supreme Being, the Object of our worship, is never unmindful or inattentive nor does He in any special manner direct His attention towards His devotees at any particular hours. His door is open all the twenty-four hours and He is ever ready to shower His mercy and grace. Fixation of time is necessitated by our own weaknesses and not on account of any distribution of time by the True Supreme Being.

It is evident from the foregoing statement that if a man worships God only once in twenty-four hours and is able to concentrate his attention inwards correctly, he is thousand times better off than those people who say their prayers five or seven times a day but have no control over their attention. But if these people during their five or seven occasions of prayers can concentrate their attention inwards each time or most often, they are better off.

Some people consider prayer as paid labour and think that the greater the number of times one offers prayers, the greater will be its reward but in the Religion of Saints prayer or spiritual practice is only an expression of our true love for the Supreme Being. To perform spiritual practice in the hope of making some gain or of escaping punishment is devotion of an inferior type. It is possible that, like a child who goes to school in the beginning with the temptation of getting reward, some *paramarthis* also may engage themselves in internal practices on account of some fear or hope for something but just as a student on getting of age acquires a taste for knowledge and his attention of its own accord turns towards studies, in the same manner on getting experience of inner joy and bliss and on the flaring up of the flame of Divine Love, the devoted *paramarthi* begins to apply himself to internal practice out of sheer love. Such a devotee does not need to adhere to any fixed hours. Within him, his attention is attracted inwards all the time and he keeps up His recollection within him all the twenty-four hours.

For those brethren who have not attained this stage, it is necessary to sit for internal practices for about an hour, both mornings and evenings and if sometimes they do not get time twice, then in the morning before engaging in any worldly activities and also to devote themselves in proper manner to *Sumiran* (Repetition of the Holy Name) and *Dhyan* (Contemplation of the Holy Form) during day and night, while moving about or doing their work, whenever it is possible to do so. They should remember:—

پنج وقت آمد نمازے رهنمون
آسقانش را سلات دائمون

Panj vaqt āmad namāze rahnamūn,
Āshiqānash rā salāte dāyamūn.

Translation —

Five times which have been fixed for prayers during the day, are intended only to show the way. For the lovers of God all time and every moment is fit time for prayers.

DISCOURSE 37

THE TEST OF A TRUE DISCIPLE

Some qualities of a true disciple have been described in *Śabda*[1] No. 124 of Prem Bilās[2]. Hereunder the meanings of that *Śabda* are given so that the qualities can be properly appreciated.

सतगुरु पूरे खोज कर, हुआ चरन लौलीन।
राधास्वामी कहें पुकार कर, शिष पूरा लो चीन ॥ १ ॥

1 Vide Note 2 on page 9. 2 The name of the book which contains all the poems written by His Holiness Sahabji Maharaj, the author of this book.

Satguru pūre khōj kar, huā charan laulīn,
Radhasoami kahen pukār kar, śish pūrā lō chīn. 1

Translation —

Merciful Radhasoami says that the perfect disciple is he who first searches for the Perfect Satguru and on finding Him, forgets himself in His devotion. 1

Explanation —

Merciful Radhasoami says that that person alone who after searching the Perfect Satguru devotes himself to His Feet is the perfect disciple. Generally, people on meeting any good *Sadhu* or *Brahman* become his disciples and receive initiation and they serve him as much as possible but they remain engrossed as usual in matters pertaining to their health, children and wealth etc. Such persons do not deserve to be called true disciples He alone is the true and perfect disciple who first devotes himself to the search for the Perfect Satguru and until he finds Him does not accept any other as his Guru and when he meets the true Guru, he applies himself completely to His *Bhakti* (devotion) with a sincere heart. The state of love of a true disciple should be as is described below.

गुरु दर्शन मन लोचता, चैन न छिन को आय।
जगत भोग फीके लगे, ता सँग मन नहिं जाय॥ २॥

Guru darśan man lōchtā, chain na chhin kō āye,
Jagat bhōg phīke lagen, tā sang man nahin jāye 2

Translation —

His mind longs for the vision of the Guru without which he gets no rest even for a moment, pleasures of the world appear insipid to him and his mind is not attracted by them. 2

Explanation —

The devotee's mind should have such intense longing for the Guru's *darśana* that he may have no rest at any moment

and his attention be so strongly fixed in the Feet of the Guru that all the pleasures of the world should appear to him as of little value and he may have no interest in them

लोभ मोह मन से गये, मनुआँ बेपरवाह ।
रतन खान घट में खुली, जगत काँच नहि भाय ॥ ३ ॥

Lōbh mōh man se gaye, manuān be-parwāh,
Ratan khān ghat men khulī, jagat kānch nahin bhāye. 3

Translation —

Greed and infatuation have left his mind and it has become care-free. His inner self appears to him as attractive as a mine of jewels and worldly things seem to be fake. 3

Explanation —

Greed and infatuation for worldly objects which had developed on account of the *samskaras* of his past and present lives may disappear altogether from his mind which should function with perfect detachment for worldly objects This detachment should not come as a result of any mental thinking but just as a person on getting a mine of jewels does not care for imitation jewels, the disciple on being blessed with love for the Guru finds no enjoyment in worldly pleasures and hence he would not care for worldly objects. In the company of the Guru, the disciple naturally gets opportunities to listen to His teachings. He alone is the true disciple in whom good sense awakens on listening to the discourses of the Guru The result would be that he would not be troubled in the least when he finds himself involved in loss or gain, misery or distress, as he would easily understand for what ultimate gain and under what divine dispensation the Lord permits ups and downs in his life :

रोग सोग चिन्ता मिटी, सुमति दात गुरु दीन ।
परख मौज कुछ पाय कर, संशय सभी टलीन ॥ ४ ॥

उमँग उमँग सेवा करे, उमँग उमँग सतसंग ।
उमँग सहित सुमिरन करे, उमँग सहित धुन संग ॥ ५ ॥

Rōg sōg chintā mitī, sumati dāt Guru dīn,
Parakh mauj kuchh pāye kar, sanśaye sabhī talīn 4
Umang umang sevā kare, umang umang Satsang,
Umang sahit Sumiran kare, umang sahit dhun sang 5

Translation —

Disease, grief and care have all vanished and the Guru has granted gift of right understanding.
As he is able to understand His Will to some extent, all his doubts have vanished. 4
He performs *seva* with gusto, attends Satsang with love,
Performs Sumiran with exultation and hears the sound with rapture. 5

Explanation —

The true disciple does not care for loss or gain. He cheerfully accepts the will of the Lord and serves the Guru daily with new zest. He attends His satsang, repeats the Name given by the Guru and contacts the spiritual sound (*Anhad Śabda*) internally.

बलिहारी वा शिष्य के, हौं वारी सौ बार ।
जड़ चेतन का भेद जिन, चीन्ह लिया मन मार ॥ ६ ॥
कारज जग के सब करे, सुरत रहे अलगान ।
कमल फूल नित बास जल, तौ भी अलग रहान ॥ ७ ॥

Balihārī vā śishya ke, haun vārī sau bār,
Jaṛ chetan kā bhed jin, chīnh liyā man mār. 6
Kāraj jag ke sab kare, Surat rahe algān,
Kamal phūl nit bās jal, tau bhī alag rahān. 7

Translation —

I take my hat off to the disciple a hundred times who keeps his mind controlled and discriminates between matter and spirit. 6

And so performs all his worldly duties but keeps himself detached just as a lotus which grows in water always remains detached from it. 7

Explanation —

I take my hat off again and again to a disciple who by performing the Yoga practice taught by the Revered Guru, has controlled his mind fully, has realized the difference between *Jarh* (i e. matter) and *Chetan* (i.e. spirit) and in spite of the fact that he has realized the difference (i.e. between unreality and reality), he still performs all his worldly duties. It is not that he, because of his helplessness or because of having renounced the world, ignores his religious and worldly duties, but he attends to all these as usual and keeps his attention turned inwards, just as a lotus, which, though always in water, remains above it.

गुरु पूरे दुर्लभ अती, तीन लोक के माहिं।
पूरा शिष भी सहज से, ढूँढ मिलेगा नाहिं॥ ८॥

Guru pūre durlabh atī, tīn lōk ke māhen,
Pūrā śish bhī sahaj se, dhūndh milegā nāhen. 8

Translation—

Of course, the Perfect Guru is extremely difficult to find in all the three worlds[1], but a perfect disciple also would not be easily found 8

Explanation —

It is true that it is extremely difficult to find a perfect *Guru* in the three worlds (i e. in the entire *Brahmanda*) that is, he can be found only with great difficulty and after great search but it is also clear that a perfect and true disciple also cannot be found easily, i e. it is extremely difficult to become a perfect disciple.

1. According to Hindu belief, the creation has three regions, i.e the heaven, earth and the nether world. Thus the expression 'Three Lokas' means the entire creation'

परम कृपा जब गुरु करें, परम दया कर्त्तार ।
पूरे गुरु के खोज की, तब पावे जिव सार ॥ ९ ॥

Param kripā jab Guru karen, Param dayā kartār,
Pūre Guru ke khōj kī, tab pāve jiv sār 9

Translation —

When the Guru and Creator both show extreme mercy,
Then only a man finds the secret of the search for the Perfect Guru. 9

Explanation —

When the Guru is extremely merciful to somebody and the True Supreme Being also is equally merciful to him, only then an eager desire for the search of the Perfect Guru awakens in his heart. In other words, when the True Supreme Being has willed to detach any man from the world and to give him salvation and the Perfect Guru, then present in the world, also wills to help him in the achievement of salvation through Himself, then and only then the desire for the search of the True and Perfect Guru can awaken in a man's heart. Hence blessed are those who, though belonging to any religion or society or living in whatever worldly condition, have the desire to search for the True Guru This desire would not go in vain but would surely put them in contact with the Perfect Guru some day and the day they meet the Perfect Guru the process of their spiritual progress would commence easily. But the condition of those people is of course regrettable who are entangled in the bonds of the physical body and whose mind is full of wrong notions and who hanker only after worldly enjoyments. As majority of the people in the world are of this kind, so people generally do not entertain true desire for the search of the Perfect Guru and the perfect disciple.

देह फन्द जिव फाँसिया, कुमति किया घट बास ।
पूरे गुरु और शिष्य की, कौन धरे मन आस ॥ १० ॥

Deh phand jiv phānsiā, kumati kiyā ghat bās,
Pūre Guru aur śishya kī, kaun dhare man ās. 10

Translation —

Jivas are tied down to their bodies and folly has possessed their minds.
Who would then care to search for the True Guru and the true disciple ? 10

DISCOURSE 38

VIEWS ON MACHINERY

Some people in India and in other countries think that the world has suffered considerably on account of the invention of machinery. They say that unless all the Governments of the world forbid the use of machinery by law, there would be no peace in the world. Are these views of the people justified ? In our opinion the reply is in the negative. Machines are after all only instruments which save men from a lot of labour. The job which could not formerly be completed in a month by twenty men working together, can now be completed by two or three persons in a day. It is of course true that nations which have made great progress in the matter of invention of machinery have become rich at the expense of other nations and those men who own mills working on mass production are richer than kings. It is also true that the result of the accumulation of wealth at one place is that the nations whose wealth has thus been sucked away have become poor and destitute and that those in whose hands the wealth has accumulated have become licentious, self-conceited and slaves of wealth. It should however be noted that even before the machine age, wealth remained concentrated mostly in the hands of a few persons and nations and that majority of the people had to live from hand to mouth and use coarse clothes. Besides this, is there any

system in the world which is equally beneficial to every individual and suited to every condition ? Moreover, who prevented these nations, which have become destitute, from using the inventions made by others or from inventing new machinery for themselves ? Life in the world is like a race course, in which all the nations and in fact all the individuals are taking part. Those who fall behind have to live lives of poverty and destitution and those who go ahead of others or remain abreast of others live lives of prosperity.

It should also be considered that man's body is itself a machine. Similarly, the bodies of animals, birds and plants are also different kinds of machines. Besides, the sun is a machine which draws an immeasurable quantity of water from the seas and takes it to the mountains and plains Ordinary things of domestic use which have come down to us from ancient times are all various kinds of machines. What are spinning wheels, mill stones, ovens, *angithis*[1], water wheels, *charsas*[2], mortars, pestles etc if not machines ? How can it therefore be justifiable for man who uses all these machines to be hostile to the use of the new and more useful machines of modern times and to frown at them ? It is conceded that man has not always made legitimate use of the invention of machinery in the present age as, for example, the manufacture of many machines which are made for the defence departments is improper and unjustified. How we wish that those who desire the manufacture of such machines had considered that they and their countrymen would some day have to undergo much suffering on account of these inventions in accordance with the proverb "He who digs a well for others falls into it himself" ! It is however to be remembered that if man suffers from inventions of this kind, the fault lies with the view-points and intentions of those who love machines, for if they had no wish to crush other

1. An angīthī is a portable stove made of iron sheet and used in cooking. 2 A big leather bag used in India for drawing out water from well for irrigation purposes.

nations, they would have never helped in the progress of these inventions and without their help people who invented the machines would never have cared to pay any attention to those machines. It would be very good if those who oppose the use of machinery direct their efforts towards banning the manufacture and use of machinery of this type. In that case surely the whole of the civilized world would be with them*.

It is absolutely necessary for India which is very backward in matters of inventions that it should fully realize the necessity of having machinery and pay sufficient attention towards it Many parts of India are extremely hot. If by some method solar heat could be utilized for production of steam, electricity could then be produced very cheaply and the present deficiency of coal and oil could easily be overcome. Some time ago it was reported in newspapers that some one in Cairo had invented a boiler and an engine which worked with the steam generated with the help of solar heat. Can not inventions of this kind be made in India ? In the same way, chemicals worth crores of rupees are imported into India from other countries. These could be easily manufactured here if a little attention is paid to the matter and proper machinery is used. How we wish that at least one-tenth of the attention which is being paid to political advancement had been directed to the use of machinery and promotion of inventions so that many of our difficulties could have been easily removed ! It would be better for *Satsangi* youngmen to learn the use of machines in workshops than seeking service on Rs. twenty or Rs. twenty-five per mensem. It should also be remembered that just as there is a special pleasure in controlling a horse, so there is a special pleasure also in taking work from a machine.

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* These words of the Author have come out to be too true, for the world is now turning in this direction.

DISCOURSE 39

ANSWERS TO THE OBJECTIONS OF A YOGI OF MADRAS

In Madras province, there are thousands of lovers of rejuvenation (*Kaya Kalpa*)[1] and alchemy. It is said that'*Kalpa*', a mixture of indigenous medicines, can make the human body immortal if it is taken in a proper way for some days and that the alchemist can easily convert everything into gold. It is popularly said that in the forests of Madras such men are met with as are more than one hundred thousand years old and can convert milk, bricks and stones etc. into gold. Some days back a letter was received from Tinnevelly[2] in which an account of a young Madras *Yogi* was given. The *Yogi* claimed that he knew alchemy well. One or two *Satsangi* brothers visited him and during conversation enquired if he knew anything about *paramartha*. In reply the *Yogi* raised some objections against the Radhasoami Faith. His strongest objection was that *Satsangis*, like so many other worldly people, were involved in financial difficulties which clearly showed that Merciful Radhasoami did not possess the power to satisfy the financial needs of *Satsangis* in some extraordinary way. This objection proves that the *Yogi* is very proud of his knowledge of alchemy and is wholly ignorant of true *paramartha*. If in reality he knows alchemy, then he could rightly and correctly be proud of it and as scientists concede in this age that mercury and lead can be converted into gold and silver respectively by passing electric current through them and bringing about chemical changes, nobody dare say anything against this claim of the science of alchemy but it is yet to be established if the *Yogi* really knew alchemy. Assuming however that the *Yogi* knows this science, let us

1. It is believed that the Kāyā-Kalpa treatment makes an old man quite young in vitality. 2 A District town in the extreme south of India.

consider here for the edification of *Satsangi* brothers whether this science has any connection with *paramartha* or not and whether knowledge of this science can or cannot render any help to the masses in carrying on their religious practices.

The number of *Satsangis* these days is about one lac and is increasing daily. If Merciful Radhasoami were to teach alchemy to all the *Satsangis* to enable them to meet their financial needs and all the brothers begin to manufacture gold according to their heart's desire, then gold would not be gold. The price of gold is high because it is found only in small quantities but if lacs of men begin manufacturing gold easily at home, the price of gold would not be more than that of iron and the teaching of alchemy to all the *Satsangis* by Merciful Radhasoami for the fulfilment of their financial needs would be meaningless. Besides, if the people come to know that every body is taught alchemy on joining the *Satsang*[1] then probably everybody would try to join the *Satsang* community by hook or crook. The result of all this would be nothing else than that insincere persons would crowd in large numbers and dis-service would be done to true disciples.

Moreover, it should be understood that the aim of *paramartha* is not to amass riches. The word '*paramartha*' is made of two words '*param*' (highest) and '*artha*' (aim) If the *paramartha* i.e the highest aim of human life is acquisition of worldly pleasures, *Paramartha* can mean riches, but all the sensible men of the world have accepted spiritual advancement as the ideal of human life Riches are not needed for spiritual advancement. In fact, riches are an obstacle to the attainment of this ideal. For example, the

1. Satsang (Sat Sang) is association (Sang) with Sat i e Sat Purusha (Supreme Being) or the Satguru (Spiritual Teacher) 'Satsang' also refers to congregational divine service conducted under the presidentship of the Satguru or some Saint. The organization where arrangements exist for such association with some Spiritual Teacher or for holding such congregational divine service is also known as 'Satsang'. Here reference is to the Radhasoami Satsang.

words of Lord Christ are, "it is not so difficult for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle as it is for a wealthy man to enter the kingdom of God.

It is for this reason that true *Rishis*[1], *Sadhs*[2], Saints[3] and *Mahatmas*[4] never paid any heed themselves to worldly riches and possessions nor did they allow their disciples and devotees to accumulate them. On this, the critic might say that this only means that the seeker of *paramartha* may continue toiling according to his intelligence and capacity and may still go on suffering worldly troubles and miseries and that true *paramartha* and *Sadhs* and Saints shall remain quite unconcerned about the troubles of that poor fellow. These objections are however futile. If the Guru of that *Yogi* has made him free from all worries about money by teaching him the alchemy of making gold, Merciful Radhasoami has also made all his devotees happy and wealthy by teaching them '*Nam Rasayan*'[5] i.e. the alchemy of the Holy Name and it has also been said that the alchemists of the world stand in no comparison to him who knows the '*Nam Rasayan*'. If there is an unfortunate *Satsangi* who does not make use of the *Nam Rasayan* and remains involved in worldly troubles, it is his own fault just

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1 The word Rishi is said to have been derived from the Sanskrit verb 'rish' (ऋष्)—'to go' i.e. one who has gone beyond this world. Or perhaps from riś (driś दृश्—to see) i e one who sees, a seer. The word also means 'a ray of light' 2 The word is derived from the Sanskrit verb साध् (Sādh), 'to go straight to goal', 'to straighten a path', 'to guide correctly'. It refers to a person who performs spiritual practices and has attained high spiritual status 3. The word is used for persons of high spiritual attainments, particularly those who have attained or have descended from the Region of Pure Spirituality 4. Person with highly developed spirituality It is a compound of 'Mahā' (महा) 'great' and 'ātman' (आत्मन्) 'soul'. 5 Rasāyan or alchemy is believed to remove all the troubles of man because a man can satisfy all his desires through gold. Nām Rasāyan, alchemy of the Holy Name can, if the Holy Name Radhasoami is repeated in the proper manner at the spirit centre, make a man entirely indifferent to world and its objects and give him such internal happiness as is not available to any one.

as the *Yogi* also would not be able to fulfil his worldly needs if he does not make use of the knowledge of alchemy which he possesses. If an enquiry is made from those *Satsangi* brothers who appreciate the value of the Holy Name and have therefore devoted themselves to their spiritual practices in a proper manner whether they would accept the gold-making alchemy in place of the experience of joy, bliss, grace and happiness that they had, they would certainly reply in the negative. All the people in the world are not poor There are hundreds of princes and potentates and wealthy people also who without knowing alchemy possess untold wealth. Even then, they are always in need of something or other and are unhappy. Hence every true *paramarthi* understands quite well that gold and silver are not the proper remedies for the removal of worldly troubles. Of course, every one needs money to satisfy his worldly needs but if a person adopts a middle course and keeps proper control over his mind and senses, his needs are reduced to the minimum and can easily be satisfied with only an ordinary income and this much income can easily be earned from some ordinary business or work. It is well-known that arts and crafts occupy a prominent position in the present times and persons well-versed in these can easily earn money but it should be noted that Merciful Radhasoami has started colleges and workshops for helping the children under his protection in this connection. Any brother who wishes to take advantage of this arrangement in the *Satsang* can do so.

Now the other objections of the *Yogi* are being taken up. He says that ordinary persons cannot acquire the degree of purity and sanctity of heart required in the Radhasoami Faith. Thus ordinary people cannot get any benefit from the Yoga practices prevalent in the Radhasoami *Satsang*. This objection of the *Yogi* is very very trivial. In all the well-known systems of *Yoga* for achieving realization of the *Atma*[1] and

1. Vide note 5 on page 11.

Paramatma[1], the observance of *Yamas* and *Niyamas* has been considered the first step. Thus a fickle and impure mind is absolutely unfit for the realization of the *Atma*. Special care in matters of diet and in one's dealings with worldly people is absolutely necessary for keeping the mind free from these failings. There is no wonder then if the Radhasoami Faith teaches that one should abstain from liquor and meat etc., live on one's honestly earned income, abstain from causing injury to any living being by thought, word and deed and internally control his mind and senses. There are hundreds, nay thousands of persons in India who do not practise any kind of *Yoga* and who are not *Satsangis* either, but even then act according to these principles. The difficulty is that there are many wrong notions prevalent in the public about the Sound Practice (*Śabda Abhyasa*[2]) and a person who has not gained any internal experience after having actually performed the Sound Practice himself for some time can never fully gauge the great merit of this practice. It is true—

बुलहवसी और कपटी जन को नेक न धुन पतियाई ।

Bulhavasī aur kaptī jan kō nek na dhun patiyāyee

Translation —

> Crafty persons and those who are engrossed in the world are not able to establish contact with *Śabda* (Sound) even to the smallest extent—

that is, the mind which is engrossed in worldly desires and is crafty is quite unfit for the Sound Practice. But the person

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1 Vide Note 6 on page 11. 2. When any energy becomes kinetic, it produces sound Thus when spiritual energy is kinetic, it is also accompanied by sound or Śabda This is known as spiritual sound The Śabda accompanying the current of spiritual energy which emanated from the Supreme Being and which sustains the entire creation is the Śabda Radhasoami The practices by which man's spirit is enabled to establish contact with this sound current is known as 'Śabda Abhyasa'. It is also known as 'Surat Śabda Yoga' i e the system which unites the Surat i.e. the spirit with the 'Śabda'.

who has sincere and strong desire in his heart to achieve purity of mind, first practises *Sumiran* (Repetition of the Holy Name) and *Dhyan* (Contemplation of the Holy Form) and steadies his mind and when he has gained a little tranquility of mind, applies himself to the Sound Practice. When the sound manifests itself within him, all the impurity of his mind disappears at once. Those brothers who have had experiences of this kind know very well how easily a distracted and mischievous mind is subdued and how soon the impurities disappear from the mind and Love fills the heart. We suggest to the *Yogi* that he can follow any path he likes and he may take advantage of the *Yoga* system, if he knows any, which does not require much purity and clarity of mind, but he should not unnecessarily criticize the Radhasoami Faith, when he is ignorant of the *Yoga* practices current in this Faith.

Besides the above-mentioned objections, he also says that the system of beginning the *Yoga* practice with the Sixth Centre[1] from the very start is improper, that the practice should begin with the First Centre[2] and that it is wrong to instruct stepping all at once on to the highest rung of the ladder.

It is true that in the past, the *Yoga* practice was generally commenced from the *Guda Chakra*[3] or the First Centre but some people commenced this practice from the *Nabhi Chakra*[4] or the navel centre or even the *Hridaya Chakra*[5] i.e heart

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1 The human body, as microcosm, contains force-centres which correspond to the various spheres of the Material-spiritual Region or the Pind Deśa of the creation Similarly, there are centres in man's brain corresponding to the spheres of Spiritual-material and the Pure Spiritual Regions. The force-centre or chakra corresponding to the topmost sphere of the Pind is Ājñā Chakra. It is also known as the Sixth Centre 2 First Centre is the bottom Centre of the human body 3. Name of the Centre near the rectum in the human body. It is the lowest Chakra in the human body. 4 'Nābhi' means navel There is a force-centre near the navel. 5 Force-centre at the heart.

centre also but the Saints[1] made their disciples commence the practice from the Sixth Centre only. The reason is that it is at the Sixth Centre that the spirit has its seat inside the human body and thus the ascent of the spirit begins from that Centre only The spirit, while staying at the Sixth Centre, has spread to the lower centres and inside the body and as such, performance of spiritual practice at the Sixth Centre results in concentration of the spirit at that centre in a short time and when sufficient concentration of the spirit is achieved after some time, the devotee is able to proceed further up inwards. Hence the objection that commencement of the practice from the Sixth Centre is improper is based on ignorance.

The *Yogi* had made only these three objections, which have been replied to in short. *Satsangi* brothers are now advised that it is not proper to enter into discussion with anybody, merely on seeing a man in coloured clothes or hearing him talk about "*Yoga Abhyasa*" and alchemy etc. Those who talk of alchemy and other such things generally take advantage of the weakness of family men with a view to establish their own influence on them. In other words, they know that every family man has financial worries of his own and hence on hearing of an easy method of earning money he would naturally have respect and trust in them and so on getting an opportunity, they play their game. Simple folk are victims of their fraud and repent for a long time when afterwards they come to know of it.

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1. Refers to Kabir Sahab, Nanak Sahab, Jagjivan Sahab, Paltu Sahab etc etc and the Satgurus of the Radhasoami Faith.

DISCOURSE 40

ARE WE HINDUS ?

It has been taught in the Radhasoami Faith that all the *Jivas* are the children of Merciful Radhasoami. Differences of caste and creed, geographical and regional boundaries, diversity of religions and social organisations are all inventions of selfish people. As soon as a person comes out of the mire of selfishness and narrow-mindedness and has successfully attained the highest human ideal, he sees the world in an entirely different light and all these differences disappear from his heart and all living beings appear to him as his own brothers. This is the reason why men of every caste and creed have been joining the Radhasoami Satsang from the time of Param Guru[1] Soamiji Maharaj till today without any restriction or difficulty and today we find in the Satsang community persons from all religions and classes, viz, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jains, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Śudras and all of them treat each other like brothers and it was for this reason that Param Guru Huzur Maharaj expressed His desire to introduce the custom of inter-marriage[2] among Satsangis and Param Guru Maharaj Sahab gave practical shape to this blessed idea, and now Satsangi brothers have generally accepted this principle and in the last few years sufficient number of marriages have been performed in the Satsang community without distinction of caste or creed. It

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1 The expression 'Param Guru' is used for a Saint Who has attained the highest spiritual status and who is in communion with the Supreme Being The word 'Guru' literally means One who illumines or removes darkness and 'Param' means the highest. The expression 'Param Guru' thus means 'Prime Light-giver' or 'Manifestor' which can refer to the Supreme Being alone Hence 'Param Guru' can be used for that Saint only Who is one with the Supreme Being 2 In India, marriages generally take place among members of the same caste or same religion and same province. The word 'inter-marriage' means 'inter-caste' or 'inter-provincial' or 'inter-community' marriage

is true that this kind of teaching is not confined to the Radhasoami Faith and many other religious societies are also against the restrictions of caste etc. but those people who are called orthodox Hindus comply strictly with the obligations of caste etc. and if any enquiry is made from them or the matter is viewed from their point of view, then we are not entitled to call ourselves Hindus. Fortunately, however, the reins of the Government in India are not in their hands and the number of people who look upon every man as man and also a brother is sufficiently large.

But the question is whether we are really Hindus? It is not easy to answer this question because it has not been possible yet to decide what the meaning of the word 'Hindu' is? Many Indians and Englishmen attempted to define this word, but so far none has succeeded in this good work. The literal meaning of the word 'Hindu' is 'thief', 'slave' and 'black' etc. If the literal meaning of the word is accepted, no sensible man would like to be known by this name and if 'Hindu' means 'an inhabitant of Hindustan', we are certainly Hindus But in this sense all Muslims and also Englishmen who are domiciled in this country or whose ancestors came to live here would be termed 'Hindus'. Hence in Arabia and other countries the Muslims of this country who go for *Haj*[1] or on travel are called 'Hindu Sheikhs'. One learned Englishman when he was much vexed over the meaning of this word, defined the word 'Hindu' as a Hindustani[2] who is neither a Christian nor a Muslim. If this definition is accepted, even then we are Hindus. But according to this definition all Chinese, Japanese, Jews and Parsis etc who do not belong to the Islamic or Christian faiths are all Hindus.

Some say that 'Hindu' is he who has faith in the *Vedas* and the *Rishis*. We are always ready to accept the *Vedas*[3] as

1 Holy pilgrimage of Muslims to Mecca. 2. Inhabitant of Hindustan 3. The four Vedas, viz Rig-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sāma-Veda, Atharva-Veda.

Vedas and the *Rishis* as *Rishis*, but many Christians and Muslims also accept this. Thus it is not enough to accept the *Vedas* as *Vedas* and the *Rishis* as *Rishis* for being entitled to be called a Hindu and therefore it is also necessary to accept the *Vedas* as God-made and the *Rishis* as *Brahmadarśi*[1] (those who have had vision of *Brahma*). But there are many who are called Hindus but who do not accept the *Vedas* as God-made or the *Rishis* as *Brahmadarśis*. We gladly concur that in India many *Rishis* were *Brahmadarśis* and we also admit that our ancestors accepted the *Vedas* as divinely-inspired writings and also God-made. We also believe that the *Vedas* contain knowledge upto the region of *Brahma Purusha* and we also hold that many *mantras*[2] are revelations of inspired *Rishis* and are full of excellent and holy ideas But we are not prepared to agree that all the *mantras* of the *Vedas* are of this type, that the *Vedas* are eternal, that their *mantras* always exist within *Iśvara*[3], that all knowledge, whether mundane or spiritual is to be found in the *Vedas,* that no truth appertaining to knowledge or science could exist outside the *Vedas,* that when dissolution[4] takes place, the knowledge of the *Vedas* merges into *Iśvara* and that in the beginning of the next creation, the same *mantras* are again manifested by *Iśvara*, for if this were so, it must be held that *Iśvara* is lover of *Vedic* Sanskrit only. Many learned people admit that *Rig-Veda* is the oldest book of the world, although after deciphering the scripts acquired from the tomb of Tutankhamen[5] this has now become doubtful. We have however no difficulty in accepting the

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1 'Brahma-darśana' means vision of Brahma. 'Brahma-darśi' is one who has had darśana or vision of Brahma, i e one who has realized Brahma 2 The word 'mantras' is popularly used for the 'Richas' of the Vedas 3 The word 'Īśvara' is very commonly used by Hindus for God 4 The Hindi word is 'Pralaya' which stands for dissolution of the Material-spiritual Region 5 Name of a Ruler of the 18th Dynasty of Egypt He ruled from 1358 to 1353 B C Many objects which reveal the greatness of his times were recovered from his palace and also tomb after 1922 Here reference is to the hieroglyphic writings recovered from his tomb

Rig-Veda as the oldest book. Of course, on reading some prayers of the *Vedas* we are much astonished and feel ashamed of treating these *mantras* with respect. It is stated on page 13 of Part I of '*Veda-Sarvasva*' that it is certain there are prayers in the *Vedas* for the killing of enemies, breaking their limbs and destroying their wealth etc. but the people have not been permitted at all to perform rites which would produce such results Man has a right to pray but to accept the prayer or not is the privilege of *Iśvara*. The author of *Veda-Sarvasva*, Part I has the greatest esteem and love for the *Vedas* and has attempted in his book to weaken the force of a strong objection, but he also had to admit what kind of prayers for injury to the enemies are contained in the *Vedas*. If *Iśvara*, in the very beginning of the creation teaches prayers of this kind to men, we must bid good bye to the ideas of forgiveness for enemies and establishing relationships based on brotherly affection and love in the world. We give below the meanings of a few *mantras* to illustrate our point:—

"O Destroyer of enemies! Collect the heads of those robbers who are our enemies and crush them under thy feet. Thy feet are quite broad. *Indra*[1] protects his *Arya* devotees in battle. He arranges for the defeat of those who do not perform *Yajnas*, for the benefit of *Aryas* He gets the black skin of enemies flayed and burns it to ashes. O *Aświni-Kumaras*[2]! destroy those who shriek like dogs and wish to fight against us; bestow wealth on those who praise you Accept this our prayer."

We regret it is not possible for us to admit that God thinks it to be His duty to teach men such prayers.

Besides, there is another difficulty that it is not decided which particular books are fit to be called *Vedas*, nor is it

1. Chief of the gods and ruler of heaven, Indra is one of the important gods referred to in the Vedas 2 Name of two gods, who are always together They are believed to be bestowers of wealth and prosperity on men.

settled whose commentary is to be accepted. Generally, the *Vedas* are said to be four—*Rig*, *Yajur*, *Sama* and *Atharva* but there are two *Yajur-Vedas*—one *Śukla*, the other *Krishna* In Northern India, *Śukla Yajur-Veda* is current and in Southern India *Krishna Yajur Veda*. By accepting the existence of two *Yajur Vedas*, the number of *Vedas* becomes five Besides this, the *Rig-Veda* has got 21 *Śakhas*[1], *Yajur-Veda*, 101, *Sama-Veda*, 1000 and *Atharva-Veda*, 9. Thus the four *Vedas* have got 1131 *Śakhas* Now the question is which *Śakha* may be accepted and which not For one thing, all the *Śakhas* of the *Vedas* are not now available and secondly, opinions differ in regard to the correct number of these *Śakhas*. Swami Dayanand[2] spoke of 1127 *Śakhas*, Patanjali[3] of 1131, the author of *Kurma Purana*[4], 1130 and the writer of *Charana Vyuha*[5] Vyasa ji, 116.

Swami Dayanand in his book *Rig-Vedadi-Bhashya Bhumika* (2nd edition) on page 292 has written—"The four books of the *Mantra* portion[6] of the *Vedic* literature which are named *Vedas*, are all said to be self-true (*Svatah-Pramana*)[7] and Aitereya, Sātapatha etc., and other ancient genuine books, which are different from the four Samhitās, are fit to be accepted as *Paratah-Pramana*[8]. Similarly 1127 *Śakhas* of

1 The word 'Śākhā' literally means a branch or division In the case of the Vedas, it means 'a school of a particular Veda having its own traditional text and interpretation e g. Rig-Veda had Śākhās of Śākalas, Bāshkalas, Āśvalāyanas, Śānkhāyanas and Mandukāyanas 2 Founder of Ārya Samāj He lived from 1824 to 1893 A.D. 3 Founder of the Yōga School 4. The Purāna which deals with the Kūrma incarnation of Vishnu 5 A book on the Schools of the Vedas. Common belief ascribes its authorship to Vyasa. 6 'Vedas' are believed to include not only the Samhitā (i e. the continuous mantra text of the Vedas) but also the Brāhmanas, Aranyakas etc The Mantra portion is also known as 'Samhitā'. The text of the Vedas is included entirely in the Samhitās (or the Mantra portion) 7 'Svatah-Pramāna' means anyting which is accepted as true (Pramāna) on its own authority (i e svatah). Sva (स्व) means 'self'. 8. Those that depend for their veracity on the authority of some other person or book etc are called 'Paratah-Pramāṇa' 'Para' means 'other than self'.

the *Vedas*, being commentaries on the four *Vedas*, are also accepted as *paratah-pramana*.

Probably Swami Dayanand has subtracted four out of the total number of 1131, as four are original books and the remaining are *Śakhas* i.e. commentaries according to him. But the difficulty is that from a study of the *Śakhas* which are available now-a-days, it does not appear that they are commentaries on some original book. There is not much difference in these *Śakhas*, the only difference is in words of the text here and there and the number of *mantras* in some is more and in some less. Under these circumstances, which are to be called original *Vedas* and which are those four books of *Mantra* portion which may be accepted as *svatah-pramana* ? All authoritative books depend on *svatah-pramana* books for their authority and receive light from the light of the *svatah-pramana* books. Thus if all the current *Samhitas* are mere *Śakhas*, which of them are to be accepted as *svatah-pramana* and which *paratah-pramana* ? If learned men like Swami Dayanand could commit the mistake of calling the *Śakhas* as commentaries on the original *Samhita* texts though the text of all is nearly the same and the text of Yajur-Veda on which he has written his own commentary is known only as *Madhyandini Śakha* and not as an original text, how could others be blamed ? It is stated in the book '*Veda-Sarvasva*' "When it is clearly seen that among all the *Śakhas*, there is no commentary nor any book commented upon, but all of them are alike with slight differences in their words or slight addition to or subtraction from the text, how could it be reasonable that out of 1131 *Śakhas* four are original texts and 1127 are mere commentaries ?" In the opinion of the author, the name '*Śakhas*' has been given to the various schools due to difference in the text or addition to and subtraction from the number of the *mantras* of the text on account of the difference in the teachers or scholars of the various schools, as there is no other difference in the *Śakhas* except the above-mentioned. Whatever be the meaning

of the word '*Śakha*', it would have to be admitted that neither the matter of the original text of the *Vedas* nor their *Śakhas* nor of their number is a settled fact. In the same manner, everybody knows that in the *Mahidhar*[1] commentary on the *Vedas* the *mantras* of the *Vedas* have been given very filthy meanings, while *Sayanacharya*[2] gives one meaning and Swami Dayanand quite another. Which of these is to be believed as correct and which as wrong? God mercifully manifested the *Vedas* in the beginning of the creation but alas! He did not make any arrangements for giving everlasting currency in the world to the real *mantras* and their correct meanings

In our opinion, if in reality the *Vedas* contain God's knowledge, then their meanings can be understood and explained by that person alone who has attained God's status. If ardent devotees purchase copies of the *Vedas* and worship them, it is of course not a sin, but by this act neither can they come to know the secrets mentioned in the *Vedas* nor can they derive any benefit from them. To accept the *Vedas* as God made is right and useful for that person only who, after sufficient purification of his heart, seeks the protection of a person really conversant with the *Vedas* or of a *Rishi* knowing the meaning of *mantras* and acquaints himself with the knowledge contained in the *Vedas* and afterwards puts that knowledge into practice and thereby makes his human life fruitful. Simply to have faith in the *Vedas* or to read one's meanings in the *Vedas* or those given by any other man of ordinary intellect cannot be called believing in the *Vedas* as God-made.

In this sense, we admit that we are not Hindus, but at the same time there is not a single Hindu in the whole of India today as there is none who really understands the *Vedas* Inspite

1. An un-orthodox commentator of the Vedas 2 Another commentator of Vedas and probably the best. He lived at the Vijayanagar court in the 14th century and was patronised by the Hindu Rulers of Vijayanagar.

of the fact that we are not well-versed in the *Vedas*, *Śatsangi* brothers in general, through the teachings of the Religion of Saints and the grace of Merciful Radhasoami, understand correctly and accept whole-heartedly that the *Vedas* are full of knowledge of *Brahma Purusha*. The name of this *Brahma Purusha* is '*Om*[1]' and His seat is *Trikuti* and his *Śakti* is functioning below *Trikuti* in the *Brahmanda* and *Pind Deśas* In ancient times, some people worshipped Him by reciting the *mantras* and some through performance of the *Yajnas* while some holy persons realized Him through internal *Yoga* practices. Such holy persons only are called *Brahmadarśi Rishis* Not all the *Rishis* were *Brahmadarśis*[2], nor did all the people perform *Yoga* practices. We all are the progeny of those holy persons. The *Vedas*, the six *Darśanas*[3], *Smritis*[4] etc. serve to remind us of those holy persons. We should never for any reason whatsoever show any disrespect to the things left by our ancestors but it is not necessary that we should blindly accept every idea of theirs as true. Without a well-versed and spiritually advanced Guru neither the *Vedas* nor any other books wherein internal secrets are described can be understood Hence the primary need is to find an inspired Adept or a Perfect Being. If we luckily meet Him, He can easily make us understand the secrets of the teachings of the *Rishis* by gradually making us fit for the purpose. There is no difference at all in the description of internal secrets of the Regions upto *Brahmanda* as contained in the teachings of the *Rishis* and as given in the Religion of Saints, but the secret of the *Satya Deśa* or *Sachkhand* which is beyond *Brahmanda* has been given by the Saints only

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1 The name 'Om' of Brahma Purusha is also mentioned in ancient books e.g Patanjali has advised the repetition of this Name. 2 Vide Note 1 on page 135 3 There are six Darśanas i e six Schools of Indian Philosophy, viz, Sāmkhya, Yōga, Pūrva Mimānsā, Uttara Mimānsā (or Vedānta), Nyāya and Vaiśeshika. 4 The word स्मृति (Smriti) is from Sanskrit verb स्मृ (smṛ) 'to remember' Ancient Hindu religious literature is divided into two classes, 'Śruti' 'that which was revealed or as heard from sages' and 'Smṛiti' 'that which was remembered'.

We also believe that the word "Hindu" is not the name of any particular religion or path, but the word 'Hindu' has a very comprehensive meaning and the Hindu religion includes all the thoughts relating to *paramartha* which originated and developed in the minds of the *Aryas* and their progeny from ancient times till today. In other words, Hindu religion is not the name of a collection of some particular principles but it is the name of a civilization which has continued from ancient times. In all these long centuries, the leaders of the *Aryan* race speculated in many directions regarding *paramartha* and thought over it from every aspect and discovered different paths or methods to give peace to the souls aspiring for *paramartha*. When any Sage or *Muni*[1] discovered a new path or established a new principle, at that time his followers formed themselves into and existed as a separate sect and remained so for a long time after him, i e. till persons well-versed in the teachings of that Sage or Muni were available among them, while all the time people holding old views continued to oppose them. But when persons well-versed in the real secrets were no longer available that sect ceased to have its separate existence and its votaries joined the general Hindu community (*Sampradaya*) and the old conservative people also accepted the greatness of that sage or *Muni*. *Mahatma Buddha* began to be counted among the ten Incarnations of the Hindus and Rishabh Dev among the twenty-four Incarnations. Similarly, Arya Samajist brothers hated to be called Hindus in the latter part of the nineteenth century but for the last few years they have gladly agreed to call themselves Hindus. It is true that the word 'Hindu' means 'thief', 'robber', 'slave' and 'servant' and it is not impossible that the Muslim Rulers gave this name to Indians as an expression of their contempt for them but history tells us that whereas some names by and by lost in estimation, there are also other names which have by and by gained in estimation. For example, the

1. Vide Note 4 on page 109.

real meaning of the Hindi word '*ganwar*' is 'an inhabitant of a village', but by and by the word degenerated and now it means a 'fool'. The meaning of the word '*Halalkhor*' is 'one who lives on his honest earnings' and '*Mehtar*' means 'very great'. But Emperor Akbar had a soft corner for the sweepers and named them as '*Halalkhors*' and '*Mehtars*'. Since then, these two words have been used for the sweepers alone. The word '*Harjai*' means 'one who is everywhere' and was used for God but now it means an 'adulteress'. On the other hand, the real meaning of the Persian word '*Shokh*' was 'haughty' and 'disrespectful' but now it has appreciated and refers to the real Beloved (God). In the same way, the word 'Bengali' was formerly used to denote a 'coward' or 'one who knows magic', but now it refers to persons who are wise, clever and brave. If we improve our mode of life, and also improve our health and physique, purify our mind and live the lives of true *paramarthis* and give up all evils and objectionable customs and live like true brothers and devotees, the meaning of the word 'Hindu' can also appreciate

DISCOURSE 41

THERE IS A GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ATTACHMENT AND DUTY

The ways of Providence are very strange. On one side nature has created a desire for children in the hearts of parents and on the other, it has put a rule in operation that many parents go without children and in case of some of those who get them, children often die in early age or after attaining some age. Persons who get no children make every effort possible in the world to get them. There is no medicine which they are not prepared to take and there is no Physician or Doctor whom they are not willing to visit nor do they feel any shame in knocking at the door of any

invisible power from God down to ghosts and evil spirits. Poor people, mad after their desire, suffer various kinds of troubles and loss and as long as their desire is not fulfilled, they consider themselves as dead, though alive. Whenever the wish of any hapless person is fulfilled through some treatment or worship etc, he rejoices immensely and he considers the Deity by whose worship he got the child as the true Creator and the Supreme Lord. For a long time in the family, nay even in the families of his friends and companions, the worship of that Deity continues and thus putting aside all common sense, the people begin to worship various kinds of deities and when after some time the child dies, the misery which they suffer cannot be imagined by every individual. Apart from these persons, there are many others who get children in ordinary course. They too feel great sorrow at the death of a son or daughter and particularly in old age the death of a child becomes the cause of great grief.

Nearly every parent in this country where the death rate of children is very high, has to face this calamity. Is it not really cruel on man that Providence at first creates in his heart a desire for children and then denies him one and if he is given a child, God suddenly snatches it away and the man is left crying and sorrowing over it. Obviously it really appears to be cruel but just consider whether man was ever told to develop attachment and affection for children. The desire for marriage was no doubt created in him by Nature but that was for the purpose of giving an opportunity to other spirits to be born in human form But the only thing permitted on this account is that people may gladly marry and that the parents who get an issue should bring up the child properly but those who have no issues are not permitted to make unlimited efforts to get a child nor is it allowed that one should feel upset unnecessarily if inspite of all care the child dies. Man himself entangles himself in attachments and affection and accumulates causes of future trouble but blames Providence. During the child's early age, his innocent

appearance and simple talk create deep affection in the hearts of the parents and when he grows up, parents begin to entertain great expectations about him and thus strong selfish interest is created. The result is that when the child passes away, the lives of both the parents are embittered. How nice it would be if man had even one-eighth of the love he has for his children for the true Supreme Being, so that worldly pain and pleasure may not come near him and when time comes he may pass away happily from out of this cycle of births and deaths and acquire immortal and everlasting bliss !

It is true that it is impossible for an ordinary man to follow this principle but for *Satsangi* brothers who have heard discourses in Satsang since their birth in regard to the transitory and trivial nature of the world and also in regard to the merits of Love of the true Supreme Being and His Omnipotence and who gladly accept the establishment of direct contact with the true Supreme Being as the aim of their lives, it should not be difficult to keep themselves free from the attachment of the children and to establish love for the true Supreme Being But alas ! some brothers on account of some of their past *samskaras* and an insufficient grasp of the teachings of the Satsang get perplexed when they have to face the ordeal Some deaths have occurred which should have been considered ideal from the point of view of *paramartha* but the minds of parents in those cases were unduly perturbed for some time. One young man clearly told his parents four days before his death that orders for his departure had been received and so they need not bother about medicines and his treatment but should prepare themselves for the coming event. On the day of his death, he requested his mother to allow him to touch her feet and to forgive him all his faults. In the same manner, be begged of his brother and other relations for permission to depart. The relations agreed to his wishes but were surprised and enquired why he talked in that way ? The youngman replied that Merciful Radhasoami was calling for

him but they pulled him towards themselves and requested that he should be gladly permitted to go. He also said that though he was a new *Satsangi*, he was ready for the journey, but they were showing weakness and it was not the time to show weakness etc. etc. After a short while, with a smiling face and repeating the Name of Merciful Radhasoami he left his ephemeral body. The death of the daughter of a brother occurred in similar circumstances. The girl was hardly 7 or 8 years old but she also stated during her last hours that she was having the vision of Merciful Radhasoami. Her parents and her grandfather saw that the little child, though unconscious of the world, was continuously repeating the Name of Merciful Radhasoami. This innocent child also departed from the world while uttering the Holy Name. It is true that besides other reasons for affection, parents love their children on account of blood relationship as well. It is also true that the hearts of ordinary people are filled with emotion on the departure of a friend or acquaintance even on an ordinary journey and it is also correct that some children on account of their good *samskaras* of the past are very lovable but the Religion of Saints does not allow that a devotee should have such attachment with a lump of flesh that his heart should remain disturbed for a long time on his separation. It is the duty of every *Satsangi* parent that he should bring up his children properly, serve them at the time of sickness and give them all comfort but it is improper to feel grief-stricken on the departure of a child, particularly when the parent sees that the child is departing cheerfully and that the Supreme Being has granted him special grace. This kind of attachment is the result of too much affection and infatuation and is harmful in *paramartha*. It is not our duty to develop our attachment for children. Our permanent and intimate connection should only be with the true Supreme Being. He is our real mother and father and friend and it is the aim of our lives to reach His Feet. All other relationships and activities are only short-lived. Our connection with them should be only as much as may be absolutely necessary.

Our children also, like ourselves, come to the world with some special object and if they accept the object we have, it would be proper for them also not to have attachment and affection for us.

DISCOURSE 42

WHAT IS REAL HOLINESS ?

You must have used such words as holy, holiness, pure, purity, 'holy', 'sacred' etc. on thousands of occasions and heard them used by others but probably you never had an opportunity to investigate what is holiness or why an object is said to be holy For example, the water of the Ganges is said to be holy and the reason given is that the Ganges has descended from heaven to earth and therefore the Ganges is holy and its water is also holy. But many other rivers also which have not come down from heaven are considered to be holy. To this, the people would reply that all those rivers which are mentioned in ancient *Śastras*, are considered to be holy because *Rishis* and Sages lived on their banks in old times. But there are many such rivers also as are not mentioned in the *Śastras* but still they are held to be holy. For example, the confluence of the Kajal and the Ganjal rivers in Raja Borari[1] is held to be holy and similarly, on the occasion of Lunar and Solar eclipses and on special days, thousands of persons bathe in rivers near their towns in order to gain purity. It may then be said that all flowing water is held in *Śastras* to be holy and thus the water of all the rivers is holy But the water kept closed in bottles and pitchers is not flowing water though in the Punjab it has been generally seen that women and staunch *Sanatanists*[2] often bring with them small vessels full of water when they return from the river

1. Name of a forest in Madhya Pradesh. 2. Vide Note 2 on page 27.

after bath and as they happen to touch all sorts of people on the way, so before entering their house they sprinkle some drops of water on their body with the idea that it would remove all the impurities contacted from the people on the way. This clearly shows that, besides running water, the water contained in a bottle or jug is also held to be holy. Take another example, that of utensils. If any earthen vessel belonging to a Hindu is touched by a Muslim or a Chamar (i.e. a low-caste Hindu), it is thrown away as it is considered to have become permanently impure but if a brass vessel is touched, it is purified by heating it in fire, but as a vessel made of bell metal cracks on being heated in fire, it is purified by rubbing it with earth and washing it with water. In the same way, we clean our hands by washing them with earth or soap and water. However, as silver vessels wear out on being rubbed with earth and silver is a costly metal, hence silver-ware is considered as purified by being washed only with water and as gold is still more costly, so it is believed that gold is purified by air.

Take the third example, that of castes. Brahmans are said to be holiest of all and Kshatriyas and Vaisyas comparatively less holy by degrees and Sudras are held to be unholy and Chandals and untouchables are considered to be extremely unholy. The reason put forward for this is that the blood of Brahmans is extremely holy and therefore they are held to be the holiest of all. But hundreds of Brahmans eat meat and take in hotels meals cooked by Muslims and untouchables. You would say that the Brahmans of this type are unclean and not holy, but if their children begin to live according to rules of *Sanatan Dharma*, they will again be considered holy. Besides, thousands of men and women in every society are immoral and secretly establish illicit relations without consideration of caste or class and thus illegitimate persons or persons of mixed origin are born in every caste and the public does not at all know anything about their parentage. In view of these facts it is wrong to hold any particular group

or caste as generally holy on the basis of purity of blood being the standard of holiness. Besides this, blood is only an extract from the food which a man uses daily. High caste people do not use any special articles which may have been received from heaven but use the very same things from the common market which are used by all other castes. Then what is the meaning of holiness in particular persons? It cannot be that holiness may depend on blood and blood may be produced from diet and the same diet may produce holy blood in one body and unholy blood in another body. And if this is correct, holiness should be in the body and not in the blood. The foundation of the body is a man's semen and the semen is formed out of diet. You would say that there is also spirituality in semen. Of course, your statement is correct but then spirituality must be present in the semen of the untouchable also If there be no spirituality, how can an untouchable have children? You would say that the spirituality in the semen of an untouchable is contaminated by his bad *samskaras*[1] and the semen of high caste people has spirituality of a higher order because of the good *samskaras*. Had it been so, the children of untouchables on attaining age of discretion, would in general have been of bad character and full of vices and the children of high caste people would have been righteous and also prone to good actions, but is it really so? The question needs no answer. Thus the argument based on semen on account of difference in *samskaras* is also futile. Probably for this very reason it is stated in a *Śloka*[2] of *Brahmanda Purana*[3]—"Everybody is a *Śudra*[4] from his birth, he becomes a *Dvija*[5] (twice-born) after the performance of the ceremony (investiture with the sacred thread) and becomes a *Vipra*[6] after reading the *Vedas* and he becomes a Brahman after knowing *Brahma*". If the teaching

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1. Vide Note 2 on page 20. 2. A particular kind of metre, also known as 'Anushtubh', used commonly. 3. Vide Note 3 on page 51. 4. Vide Note 1 on page 52. 5. Vide Note 2 on page 52. 6. Vide Note 3 on page 52.

of this *Śloka* is accepted as true, the result would be that not only the principle of equality by birth is established but all the Brahmans who are devoid of good *samskaras* and ignorant of *Vedas*, shall all be classed as *Śudras*. If it is asserted here that a man becomes *Dvija* (twice-born) by the performance of the Upanayana *Samskara*[1] (holy thread ceremony), it follows that if the Upanayana ceremony is performed in the case of *Śudras* and untouchables, they also would become *Dvijas*, but the performance of the Upanayana cermony in the case of these people is not permitted in the *Smritis*[2].

On considering all these facts, it would appear that ordinary people are ignorant about the real nature and significance of holiness and as people act blindly according to whatever their faith may be in many other matters relating to religion, ideas about holiness also are held and believed in similarly. This applies not only to Hindus but also equally to Muslim and Christian brethren. Some years back, foundations of a public library building to be built out of the donations received from a staunch Roman Catholic gentleman were laid in the Hewett Park, Agra. The said gentleman invited the Archbishop of Agra for the occasion. The Archbishop took a cup of water, repeated some verses according to his belief and after that took some water from the cup, thereafter called holy water, and sprinkled it at various places over the foundations. In the same manner i e. as in the case of the beliefs of the Hindus, the waters of the Jordan river and Zam Zam spring are considered holy by Christians and Muslims respectively. It is not our intention to criticise the religious rules of

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1 The word 'Samskāra' means a purificatory rite or ceremony. Twelve such samskāras are prescribed for Dvijas In the Upanayana Samskāra the boy is invested with the sacred thread and thus endowed with second birth and qualified to study the Vedas. The ceremony is called 'Upanayana' because by means of it the Guru draws a boy towards himself 'Upa' means 'near' and 'nayana' means 'drawing' or 'leading'. The word 'Samskāra 'is used in another meaning also , vide Note 1 on page 148 and Note 2 on page 20 2. Vide Note 1 on page 108

any community; we are concerned only with the examination of the ideas about holiness found in the minds of the masses. The Religion of Saints teaches that holiness is to be found only in the *Atma* or the Spirit and what is true of light is also true of holiness, i.e. as a luminous body lights up dark bodies coming into its contact, in the same way a holy spirit would sanctify even the unholiest thing which may come into its contact. Inspite of the fact that all the rays emitted by the Sun are only of one kind, all the lighted objects in the world are not of one colour but of different colours because their constitution is such that different objects absorb and reflect different components of the sun's rays. Similarly, different objects imbibe different degrees of holiness on coming into contact with the spirit. Thus, if there is full manifestation of the spirit within a man and his mind and body are filled with the light of the rays of his spirit, his mind and body would be considered holier in comparison to the mind and body of other persons although they cannot be considered as holy as his spirit. From the definition of "Holiness" as accepted in the Religion of Saints, it follows that a person, whether he be a Hindu or a Muslim, a high-caste Hindu or a *Śudra* or untouchable, who is performing spiritual practices for awakening his spirit is holy and he is thousand times better than those persons who consider themselves holy for any other reasons. It is a matter of satisfaction that the author of the *Śloka* from the *Brahmanda Purana* meaning of which has been given above, agrees with the teachings of the Religion of Saints.

The original *Śloka* is now given below :—

जन्मना जायते शूद्रः संस्काराद् द्विज उच्यते ।
वेदपाठाद् भवेद् विप्रो ब्रह्म जानातीति ब्राह्मणः ॥

Janmanā jāyate Śūdrah samskārād dvija uchyate,
Vedapāthād bhaved Viprō, Brahma jānātīti Brāhmanah

Translation —

By birth everyone is born a *Śudra*,
By purificatory rites he becomes a *Dvija*,
By the study of Vedas he becomes a *Vipra*,
By knowing *Brahma*, he becomes a *Brahmana*.

DISCOURSE 43

WHAT IS REAL RENUNCIATION ?

There are many religious sects in India in which greatest stress is laid on the renunciation of worldly possessions. There is no doubt that in the beginning there were many people in these sects who had sincerely renounced worldly objects. As their attention was to a certain extent withdrawn inwards and they had experience of internal bliss, naturally their attention did not flow out towards pleasures of the senses. They wore coarse cloth or covered their bodies with the skin of the deer, satisfied their hunger by eating coarse and dry bread or roots and tubers and thus passed their lives. And as their conduct and bearing was extremely good and their mind was pure to a great extent, those who came into contact with them became devoted to them and many such devout lovers of theirs considered themselves very fortunate when they got an opportunity to serve them with body, mind and riches. However, as these holy persons were free to a great extent from the bonds of mind, body and riches, unsolicited presents of wordly objects or their enjoyment had little effect on them and they continued devoting themselves entirely to their spiritual practices undisturbed. There were many greedy and mean fellows who, on seeing great esteem and honour being bestowed upon these holy persons, thought that it was the easiest way to pass their lives in ease and comfort. Thus in every age there have

been bogus hermits and crafty people who showed themselves off as having renounced all worldly things and even now-a-days there is no dearth of such people and the fun of it is that strange competition is going on between them. One person covers his body with only one yard of cloth, the other competes with him by using only four inches wide loin cloth (*langoti*), the third does away even with the loin cloth, the fourth rubs ashes on his body, the fifth sits surrounded by a ring of fire, the sixth suspends himself upside down, the seventh emaciates his hands, the eighth lies on nails, the ninth gives up use of grain, the tenth gives a demonstration of tasting urine and faeces etc. On seeing their strange condition simple people are often deluded and attracted towards such people and taking them as having sincerely renounced the world serve them with their body, mind and riches.

In the English translation of the Book named "*Ratan Karandaka-Śravakachar*" strong arguments have been given in favour of the philosophy about *Jain Sadhus* remaining naked and it is stated there that it is extremely necessary to divert attention completely from the world cognised by the body and the senses and to apply it steadfastly to the *Atma* within if *Karmas*[1] (acts) have to be nullified or destroyed and if therefore, the mind of a person is engrossed in thinking about his "*langoti*", how could he be expected to succeed in his efforts ? Hence it does not behove any seeker of salvation to speak lightly of the habit of *Jain Sadhus* to live naked. If anybody says that remaining naked is against civilization, the reply is that when such objection is not raised against religion and art how can these objections be then valid in matters pertaining to salvation ? Everybody knows that such matters have been included in many holy books of the world as would have been considered to be extremely in bad taste had they been included in ordinary books. Nor can any

1. Vide Note 2 on page 33. Of course, the conception of the Jains regarding Karmas is different from that of other religions, but all agree that it is necessary to eradicate them.

person deny that not only are the photographs (or pictures) and statues of naked men and women as works of art openly exhibited but they are also used for decoration in the common and special drawing rooms of respectable and highly cultured families of every class of society. Besides this, every new-born babe is nude. If parents refuse to bring up the baby because it is nude at birth, the world would soon come to an end In the same way, if nurses refuse to look after the patients on the basis of this very plea and men and women get non-plussed at this objection, how would the work of the world go on ?

How far these arguments can convince one is quite obvious but now the trend of mind of the civilized nations also is in favour of nudity. Hence in France, Germany and America such societies are being formed as are determined to establish nudism as a fashion On Saturdays both men and women members of some societies retire to the banks of a lake or seashore and for two days they bask there all naked in the sun and take some exercise Neither the police nor anybody else prevents them in any way and hundreds of men see the fun If this malady gains ground in the near future, then the civilized world would be in no position to criticize and naked hermits would be able to roam in the bazars of the cities as they like and without any fear.

But our question is whether it is appropriate to call 'the renouncing of the things themselves' or 'the renouncing of the desire for enjoying those things' as renunciation Can not a man living with family divert his attention from the enjoyments of the world ? All know that when an acrobat[1] walks on an aerial rope to display his skill, a drum is beaten on the ground below and thousands of men keep shouting but his attention remains fixed on maintaining his balance. Similarly,

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1 In India there are many acrobats who can walk easily and without support on a rope suspended in mid-air.

a female water carrier walks with pitcher over pitcher on her head and goes along talking but her attention remains fixed on maintaining the balance of the pitchers on her head. What can be accomplished by an acrobat and a water carrier can be accomplished by other men also. Of course, it requires practice. It should be remembered that renunciation of this type is prescribed in the Radhasoami Faith. The best renunciation is that which results from true love, i.e our love in the Feet of the true Supreme Being should be so intense that the ambrosial current from the Holy Lotus Feet should ever continue to flow within us and on experiencing it our mind may never even think of worldy enjoyments. We should perform all our worldly duties and while doing so we may use all reasonable and legitimate things of the world but our attention should throughout be under our control and our mind should remain absorbed in the bliss of His Holy Feet.

Merciful Radhasoami says:—

ऐसी सुरत प्रेम रँग भीनी ।
तिनकी गति क्या कहूँ सुनाय ॥
बड़भागी कोइ बिरला प्रेमी ।
तिन यह न्यामत मिली अधिकाय ॥

Aisī surat prem rang bhīnī,
Tinkī gati kyā kahūn sunāye,
Barhbhāgī kōi birlā premī,
Tin yeh nyāmat milī adhikāye

Translation —

Such a spirit remains absorbed in Love and it is not possible to describe its status.

Rare is the lucky devotee who has received this gift in abundance.

DISCOURSE 44

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT PRAYER

The need of prayer has been emphasized in all the theistic faiths of the world, i e faiths which believe in the existence of God. Although the prayers of all the faiths are not similar nor are the methods of submitting them identical, but in all prayers the needs of man's life have been put forward briefly and the Lord has been addressed in words of extreme love and homage Besides set prayers, the people of different sects submit through prayer their daily needs in their own way also. Thus Hindu brethren submit to their Deity in their own words after *Sandhya*[1] matters causing them pain and pleasure. Sikh brethren do so after their *Ardas*[2] and Muslim brethren after their *Namaz*[3]. Several prayers, known as *Bintis*[4], are current in the Radhasoami Faith also and these are recited in chorus by all the *Satsangis* after the Satsang[5]. Very few people make use of prayers in addition to the recitation of these *Bintis*, because more stress is laid in the Radhasoami Faith on *Sumiran* (Repetition of the Holy Name). There is a special reason for this which is given below.

Ordinary people who repeat any holy name use a rosary at the time of *Sumiran* and believe that their heart's desire would be fulfilled by repeating the holy name a certain number of times Among them, there are persons who are indifferent to the world to some extent. These persons hold

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1 Hindu method of prayers and meditation. It is known as 'Sandhyā' as it is done at the time of conjunction (Sandhi—सन्धि) of night and day i e in the morning and evening 2 The word 'ardās' literally means 'prayer'. This is a set formula which the Sikhs repeat everyday 3 Islamic method of prayer Namāz is done five times a day. 3 Vide Note 1 on page 80 5. Refers to congregational meetings of the Radhasoami Satsang

a somewhat different belief They believe that if the Holy Name is repeated at fixed hours and a certain number of times, the pleasure of the Deity is gained and facilities pertaining both to worldly matters and *paramartha* are received without asking. These people regard the repetition of the Name at fixed hours as a religious duty which they perform till their death and while doing so, they do not keep any specific worldly need in their mind. In the Religion of Saints i.e. in the Radhasoami Faith, stress is laid on purity of mind and proper concentration of attention for *Sumiran* instead of any specific time and specific number.

The idea behind prayer is not that we should close our eyes and submit our prayer in accordance with the principle that one should go on offering his prayers whether the prayer is heard or not. Prayer should come from within the heart and the devotee should have true love for the Deity in his heart. Sometimes, people begin to pray when all of a sudden some calamity overtakes them. As for example, Cardinal Marsher wrote in his famous letter—'Many people, who had left off offering prayers for a long time, have now (the middle of the first Great War) begun to look up to God. Wherever one looks to, prayers are coming forth, be it from the army or the civil departments or from public gatherings or from the hearts of the people and it is not that some set phrases only are being heard from the lips of the people but pathetic voices are being heard from the hearts of grief-stricken people'. Prayers of this kind have no doubt their advantage but they cannot bestow the real benefit of prayer on the person who prays. Shakespeare has depicted the scene of a storm at one place in his famous play 'Tempest'. When the tempest was at its height and the ship began to sink, the sailors forgot everything and only these few words came out of their lips. "All lost ! to prayers, to prayers ! all lost !" It is for consideration how persons who have passed all their lives in play and merriment could offer prayers in moments of such distress In the same manner, thousands of Hindu and Muslim brethren in India weep

bitterly and pray for help in winning lawsuits and getting rid of diseases before idols in the temples., or by placing their heads at the *Samadhs*[1] and tombs. No doubt, there is an advantage in making such entreaties and it is that the grief of such people gets lighter but at the same time the conviction that their Deity or the holy person lying in the tomb or the *Samadh* wields great power and also helps them when they weep and cry gets firmly rooted in the hearts of such people. According to Luther[2], people holding such ideas turn towards their Deity only when there is pain in their head or legs or their pocket is empty. The teachings of the Radhasoami Faith are quite opposed to this spirit of self-interest There should be true love for the Deity in the heart of the devotee and he should never pray for worldly comforts and luxuries and his Deity should be no less than the true Supreme Being and he should have no concern at all with any goddess, god or holy person of the past times. Merciful Radhasoami says that devotees should ask from the Supreme Being for nothing else but the Supreme Being Himself[3]. Of course, when any calamity which cannot be borne befalls him, it is permissible for the devotee to pray for proper support and strength to bear the calamity but he should never pray that the result should be according to any particular wishes of his own. St Augustine[4] of the 4th Century A.D. wrote in one of his prayers—'O God, bestow on me Thyself as gift, for, if instead of Thyself the whole world even is bestowed upon me, my desire would not be fulfilled'. In the

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1. The place where the holy ashes of some Holy Person, Faqir, Sādh or Saint, are interned is known as a Samādh. 2 Luther (1483-1546), Founder of the Protestant Movement in Germany. 3 In other words, the devotee should ask for the closest possible and eternal contact with the Supreme Being Radhasoami. 4. Aurelius Augustinus (354-430 A D.), famous as St. Augustine, was born at Thagaste in Africa. He was Professor of Rhetorics at Milan University when he became a Christian in 387 A D. and three years after that he became a priest. He is one of the greatest devotees Christianity has produced.

same way, Thomas A' Kempis[1] who lived in the 15th Century said, 'O God, whatever it be excepting Thyself that Thou givest, is all insufficient and cannot give satisfaction'. Similarly, it has been stated :—

مذهب عشق از همه دینها جداست
عاشقان را مذهب و ملت خداست

Mazhabe Ishq az hamā dīnhā judāst,
Ashiqān rā mazhab ō millat Khudāst.

Translation —

Religion of Love is different from all other religions,
God Himself is the religion and companion of those who love Him.

The minds of persons who make this kind of demand get purity of the highest order when they offer their prayers even when they merely think of God and their minds become quite steady and get fixed in one direction. When this state of mind is achieved, the devotee feels that everything else except the Holy Name is trivial and he gets absorbed in the repetition of the name and begins to enjoy its ambrosial content.

Khwaja Muin-ud-Din Chisti[2] says :—

ربود جان و دلم را جمال نام خدا
نواخت تشنه لبان را زلال نام خدا

Rabood jān o dilam rā jamāle nāme Khudā,
Nawākht tishnā labān rā zulāle nāme Khudā

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1. Thomas A' Kempis (1380-1471 A D.) was a sub-prior at the Convent at Mount St. Agnes He wrote many books on monastic life and on Christian faith 2 Khwaja Muīn-ud-Dīn Chistī was a Sufi mystic who lived from 1152 to 1254 A D He was born at Sanjar in Seistan on Iran-Afghanistan border. He came to India in 1210 A D and reached Ajmer in 1211 A.D where he remained till his last day He has written mystic poetry in Persian His mausoleum is at Ajmer where thousands of pilgrims go every year.

Translation—

The beatific refulgence of God's name has transported my heart and soul and the nectar of God's Name has quenched the thirst of the thirsty souls.

In other words, the nectar of the Name is so sweet that the thirst of the thirsty is at once quenched when the current of the Name begins to flow i e. the process of the Repetition of the Holy Name comes into operation automatically. This is the reason why special stress is laid in the Radhasomi Faith on bringing about such a state within a devotee that the current of the Name may begin to flow within him. A short time after this state is achieved, the devotee is enabled to engage himself in the *Śabda Abhyasa* and then a condition in which "Lord giveth and the devotee receiveth" is established.

DISCOURSE 45

LOVE AND AFFECTION SHOWN TO STRANGERS MAKE THEM OUR OWN

It is laid down in all the Faiths of the world following the *Bhakti Marga* (Path of Devotion) that man is weak and erring and makes mistakes again and again and inspite of being warned and even after his making a firm resolve, he performs improper acts. It appears that it is in the nature of man to commit sins and therefore if one has to depend entirely on man's efforts alone, it would be impossible for him to get out of the cycle of birth and death and to get admission into the presence of the true Supreme Being. But though the element of weakness or sin exists in the nature of man, the qualities of forgiveness and mercy also exist in the Supreme Being. Thus weak man is easily sustained i.e. the mercy and grace of the Supreme Being come to the aid of man and remedy all his deficiencies. Accumulated sins of his many

lives and his repeated mistakes are easily set right when he regrets them and is penitent. When a devotee receives such teachings, he becomes hopeful that through forgiveness of his Lord he shall also one day achieve the object of his life. As soon as this hope comes to be firmly entertained, thoughts of love and thanks-giving rise in the heart of the devotee again and again and fill it completely and words such as 'Gracious', 'Merciful', 'Protector of the poor' and 'Supreme Father', etc for the Creator repeatedly come to his lips and there is a glow of humility, love and devotion in every movement and word of his. On the other hand, it is also observed that many foolish people on receiving such teachings begin to lead their life like animals without any restraint. They think there is nothing to fear as their mistakes and faults would be easily forgiven when they beg for pardon. Their heart becomes possessed by pride in place of love for the Supreme Being and carelessness and shamelessness in place of feelings of love and thanks-giving and they display fearlessness, shamelessness and pride in all their talk and behaviour. There is no feeling of trust in God nor any desire in the hearts of such men to get rid of births and deaths or to get admission into the presence of the True Creator. It is no wonder therefore if feelings of contempt for the teachings of *Bhakti Marga* spring up in the minds of common people when they see how these votaries of *Bhakti Marga* conduct themselves and behave. It should however be clearly understood that instead of finding faults of this kind in others or pleasing ourselves in this way by laughing at them or speaking ill of them when we note such weakness in them, it is proper for us to turn inwards and engage in introspection of our own selves to find out if such faults do not exist in us But the difficulty is that just as a man does not see his own face, in the same way, people do not generally see their own faults and if another person points out our faults we take it very ill and we begin to look upon him with hatred and anger. Thus it is not given to every man to examine and judge the

real condition of his mind. It is a true devotee alone who can engage in introspection and see the defects of his mind. We may mention here an easy test for the guidance of the devotees so that they can easily ascertain whether their mind is free from such defects or not. The test is that we should see whether we gladly forgive the faults of our friends, acquaintances, relations and servants on their asking for pardon or, dominated by feelings of anger and enmity, we again and again think of punishing them or taking revenge The person who thinks himself to be guilty and his Lord as the Great Forgiver and who entertains strong hopes of forgiveness and mercy from his Lord, would naturally be ready to forgive those who have done him any wrong because he knows fully well that it is quite an ordinary thing for a weak-minded person to commit mistakes and it would be impossible for everyone to carry on if there is no mercy and forgiveness.

It should also be remembered that it is only some fortunate persons who get an opportunity to give comfort to others and those people who get the blessed opportunity to do good in return for evil are extremely lucky. Devotees who got opportunities in their life to do good in return for evil and to forgive their enemies on their showing the least humility and then to treat them with true affection, can well understand what extraordinary happiness one gets by doing so. If through grace, anyone gets such an opportunity, he should not let it go but should utilize it and see what happiness he gets by forgiving others.

No doubt, when a person troubles us for nothing and injures us without any reason, we take it extremely ill and naturally wish to bring the enemy to his senses and we do not consider it improper if we take strong steps to set him right and teach him a lesson. But it is enjoined on the devotees that they should always control their mind and never allow its lower tendencies to dominate over them, for otherwise the connecting link with the Lord would be severed

and instead of the devotee spending his time in repeating the Holy Name of the Lord, bad traits of the enemy would always be haunting the devotee's mind. While dealing harshly with our enemy, we should be careful not to be unnecessarily harsh and when the enemy admits his mistake or fault and pleads for forgiveness or mercy, it would be improper for us at that time to show any harshness to him, because the enemy would by then have come to the right path and no further correction would be required. If, even in such circumstances, we deal with the enemy harshly, we shall be acting merely as slaves to our minds and there would then be no difference between ordinary worldly people and ourselves.

Besides this, we should also remember that by being harsh to the enemy we can only harass him and by being cruel to him we can only humiliate him but we can conquer him only by being kind and merciful to him and an enemy who is won in this way proves more useful than the dearest friend. Thus from a *paramarthi's*[1] point of view and also from worldly considerations, the only conclusion is that it is proper for a devotee never to miss the opportunity of dealing with leniency and kindness towards others when one gets an opportunity of doing so.

DISCOURSE 46

USEFUL ADVICE TO SATSANGI BROTHERS

It is an essential duty of every intelligent member of our society to correctly understand its weaknesses and, on getting an opportunity, to make an attempt to remove them. If on such occasions any person shirks his duty or acts with laziness or indolence, he harms himself as well as the whole society. We have to admit that schisms have been in

1 For 'paramārthī', see Note 1 on page 99

existence within the Satsang circle[1] for some time past but we firmly believe that this condition would not last long. Merciful Radhasoami would through His mercy use proper ways and means to cut at the root of this poisonous plant of internal dissensions and also vouchsafe full help of every kind to those devoted brothers and sisters who undertake this blessed service of the Satsang community.

It should be understood that a man is like a tree in the garden of this world. The virtues of a man are like that sap which always circulates through every vein or fibre of the tree and his good actions are like those flowers and fruits which beautify the tree and his other actions are like those leaves and thorns which protect its flowers and fruits. It should also be understood that what is true of a man is also true of a society Societies are after all assemblages of some men. It is true that it is beneficial and necessary to have leaves and thorns to a certain extent for the protection of the flowers and fruits of a fruit-bearing tree but if it so happens that the tree gets covered all over by leaves and thorns only and it produces only one or two flowers and fruits or does not produce any flower or fruit at all, that tree does not remain fit to be retained in the garden. It then becomes fit to be used as fuel only Nobody would give it any place in a garden of flowers and fruits and if it is allowed to remain there for some reason or other, no lover of fruits and flowers would give any attention to it. If this is correct, it becomes the duty of every Satsangi brother and sister and also of the entire Satsang community, that they should take care to see that actions, which are like leaves and thorns, should be such as would support and glorify our good actions and if at any time one or more of our brothers engage themselves in such actions which may obstruct the growth and development of fruits and flowers, it would be right and proper for everybody to apply suitable remedy to put an end to this harmful situation and it would be wisdom on our part if we put into

1. Among the followers of the Radhasoami Faith.

effect only such ways and means as may not necessitate the uprooting of any tree but would, with the help of some ordinary remedies and treatment, ensure an increase in the growth of fruits and flowers and retard the growth of leaves and thorns so that the sacred service for which the Satsang organization has come into existence in the world may be accomplished beautifully and with ease.

It is not necessary to mention here in detail what this sacred *seva* is which has been hinted at above By keeping the analogy of a tree in mind it is possible to describe that *seva* in brief. As the persons who come near a tree enjoy the fragrance of its flowers and those who come under its shade, get protection from the sun and rain and those who establish closer connection with the tree enjoy the sweet juice of its fruits at the proper time. Merciful Radhasoami has planted the Satsang tree in the world for conferring more or less similar benefits, i.e. persons who come in contact with the Satsang should get some peace of heart and solace of mind through the influence of the holy teachings of the Satsang and the pious mode of life of the *Satsangis*, and those who take the trouble to come under its protection, should achieve relief from the troubles of '*Kal*'[1], '*Karma*'[2], mind and senses and those who establish close connection with the Satsang, may enjoy the pleasure of devotion to the Feet of Merciful Radhasoami, and be blessed with the realization of the spirit and also with the bliss of the Abode of the true Supreme Being.

It is obvious that service of this kind can be rendered with ease and satisfaction only when the mode of life of *Satsangi* brothers and sisters in general accords with the teachings of the Satsang. It is in the nature of the wretched human mind that on getting a little praise or censure, it falls at once into the pit of meanness and then its evil tendencies begin to manifest themselves with great force. This condition of the mind causes serious harm to individuals as well as to societies.

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1. Vide Note 1 on page 33. 2 Vide Note 2 on page 33.

DISCOURSE 47

HOW DO RELIGIONS DEGENERATE?

As everyone has full liberty of conscience and freedom of thought these days, therefore in every country educated persons are seen openly criticising the institutions established by their ancestors and the ideas that have come down from old days generation after generation. As such, the subject of religion i.e. *paramartha*, which in old days was considered very sacred and on which *Pandits, Maulvis*, clergymen and such other selected persons only were competent to talk, is now being freely discussed and we are forced to confess that now-a-days there is no respect like before for the words of the Sages and *Mahatmas* of the past. The propaganda in favour of freedom of conscience and thought is not bad and is in fact very necessary for making a man behave as a man but free-thinking should not mean that a person has freedom to say whatever comes to his lips. There are many things about which a cursory glance gives one impression, yet on looking carefully into them an entirely different impression is formed. Therefore only those persons who have got the capacity and the ability to understand the view-point of the Sages and to attain to the heights of their thoughts should have the right to express opinions about the teachings and institutions of those Sages. But alas! owing to cheap printing and free public platforms, everybody is making fun of the teachings of the Sages without the least reserve and religion or true *paramartha* is defamed for nothing.

The severest attack of the critics is generally directed against the misdeeds and improper activities of some of the respectable persons who are known followers of a religion and they say that when those particular respectable followers of a particular religion have been doing such and such improper

acts, no hope could be entertained from men of ordinary status; that when a particular Emperor or leader, who was extremely biased in favour of and devoted to a particular religion, allowed certain disgraceful and hateful things to happen in the name of religion, why should it not be concluded that it was the deep influence of religious teachings that made him so cruel and black-hearted. A critic emphatically asks—"O Religion ! what misdeeds have not been committed in thy name ?" Another critic insists that love for religion has turned the Indians mad. If religion is eliminated from India today, quarrels between Hindus and Muslims, fights between Sikhs and *Udasis*[1] and disputes between *Aryas*[2] and *Sanatanists*[3] would altogether disappear and Indians would begin to treat each other as brethren and instead of fighting among themselves they would move together on the path of progress etc. etc.

It is true that this criticism is valid to a certain extent but it is also true that all those actions on whose basis religion is defamed are not the result of the religious teachings of any Sage or Great Personality but were due to the folly, selfishness and worldly-mindedness of those persons who were responsible for them. To make our meaning clear and to substantiate the above statement, the matter is discussed is detail hereunder.

Generally speaking, when a man makes a new invention, he makes use of some higher and hidden laws of nature and he achieves with reasonable ease some extraordinary or difficult but useful result. Thus railways, telegraphs, motors and aeroplanes etc which are all inventions of the present age came into existence in accordance with this very principle.

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1. When Guru Nanak, Founder of Sikh religion, departed, the majority of Sikhs accepted Guru Angad as the successor, but Sri Chand, son of Guru Nanak, separated and his followers became known as 'Udāsīs'.
2. 'Āryas', i e. 'Ārya Samājists'. See Note 3 on page 27 3 Vide Note 2 on page 27

Various kinds of desires spring up in the hearts of men and worldly goods are required and hard work and labour have to be put in for their satisfaction but the difficulty is that everyone cannot easily acquire every worldly thing he needs nor can every person easily put in hard work or labour. It is in order to solve their difficulties that needy persons make various kinds of inventions and there are others who purchase these inventions for cash or in lieu of service and derive benefit from those inventions and provide opportunities to others also to benefit by them. It should be noted that the same principles have been working more or less in the case of various religions also, which were founded at various times by different Sages. Worldly miseries have suppressed man; he desires to have pleasure but instead he gets cup-fuls of misery. Inspired or Gifted Spirits, who from time to time make their advent into the world to help human beings, discover easy methods for securing pleasure and freedom from pain and they invite the people to take advantage of those methods. Some people turn to them and consider themselves extremely fortunate after experiencing true peace and happiness of a high order after some time and serve with heart and soul the Great Sage through Whom they received the benefit. By and by, His fame spreads and hundreds of needy persons call at the door of that Great Personality daily. As the Sage really knows how to make use of some higher law of Nature, He gladly discloses His method or practice to every seeker and every devotee gets the desired success. Thus the teachings of that Holy Person assume the shape of a new religion and a regular community of true devotees and worshippers comes into existence and a regular arrangement for conferring spiritual benefit generally starts working The first effect of true religious teachings on the devotees is that the importance of worldly pleasures and enjoyments disappears from their hearts and they begin to show sufficient un-concern for worldly troubles and get deeply attached and devoted to the feet of the Holy Person through Whose blessings they obtained the strength to break the chains of worldly pain and pleasure. As an expression of

their deep love, the devotees offer presents and gifts from time to time and in return receive deep spiritual benefit. As the Holy Person who starts the arrangement for conferring spiritual benefit, keeps absolute control over His mind and His heart is quite free from worldly desires, the large numbers of seekers or the abundance or excess of wealth or honour cannot harm or injure Him or those who live near Him. But as no human being is immortal, the Holy Person also departs from the world at the proper time. If able and competent successor is not available after Him, the entire arrangement gets upset in a short time and all those things which are the despair of the world and which have defamed religion make thair appearance there too

DISCOURSE 48

AN INTERNAL CHANGE IS A PRE-REQUISITE FOR JOINING THE RADHASOAMI FAITH

The Religion of Saints teaches that diversity in creation is due to difference in the degree of manifestation of the spirit force in various bodies. In other words, various forms and objects seen in the creation are in reality due to the manifestation of the spirit force in different degrees From this, it would appear that the principal difference between animals, plants, metals and stones etc. in the creation is of the degree and manner in which the spirit force has manifested itself. In other words, the manifestation of the spirit force is of a higher order in animals, of a medium order in plant life and of a low order in metals and stones This is why there is a difference in their nature and qualities and this is the reason why there is a visible difference in habits, shapes, forms and manner of life among animals and plants, though the same spirit force is active in both. If this idea is correct, it would not be wrong to conclude that the difference observed in the habits and nature of different

human beings, is due to the difference in the degrees in which the spirit force manifests itself. The spirit, wrapped up in the coverings of mind and body, manifests its own attributes and the coverings of the body and mind on the one hand act as the means of and as screens for the manifestation of the attributes of the spirit and on the other, they offer obstruction to the manifestation of its attributes. For example, if a lighted lamp is covered with a blanket, then on the one hand, the blanket serves as the means of manifestation of the light of the lamp i.e the light of the lamp comes out through the holes in the blanket and spreads into the room (if the blanket is so made that it has no holes, the light would not be visible at all outside the blanket) and on the other hand, the blanket acts as an obstruction in the way of light because the light can only pass through the holes in the blanket and it cannot manifest itself fully. If this idea also is correct, it is then established that there can be no visible change in the habits and nature of a man merely by listening to lectures and discourses or by studying the speeches and writings of Holy Persons concerning culture, good manners and conduct and mode of life. Visible change can occur only when such a change takes place in the constitution of his body and mind as may enable his spirit to manifest itself better than before through them. This is the reason why thousands and lacs of people who are apparently very cultured and educated and are given to talk nice things, are merely beasts as far as their actions are concerned. These unfortunate people do not know that sympathy for other creatures in the world, love for and faith in the true Creator and the practices for awakening spiritual powers are blessings by means of which a man, by and by, can acquire the status of a god[1], status of a *Hamsa*[2] and ultimately true salvation. These poor people are merely interested in the sustenance and nourishment of their body and mind, and as cattle enter the fields of their master who maintains and

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1 Vide Note 1 on page 90. 2. Pure spirit. See Note 2 on page 90.

protects them to the best of his capacity and simply think of filling their belly and are quite incapable of entertaining any idea about the loss or gain to their master, in the same manner, these persons are incapable of entertaining any other thoughts excepting the comfort and convenience of their body and mind. The difficulty is that such people form the major portion of the population of the world. It was for this reason that different Great Souls assumed the human form at different times, and made attempts to explain to the people the merits and excellence of higher spiritual life, spiritual bliss and true knowledge and to attract them towards the performance of those practices by means of which a suitable change may occur in their minds and bodies and they may be enabled to have some experience of the bliss of higher spiritual life during their life-time. But only a few persons liked their teachings and when those Sages departed, after accomplishing their mission, the common people oppressed those few persons and laid so much stress on indulgence in animal instincts and worldly enjoyments that the lovers or seekers of spiritual life either became inactive or adopted the mentality of the common people and fell from their ideal. It is no wonder therefore that now-a-days although millions of men call themselves the followers of those Great Personalities and Great Souls who took birth in this world simply to spread their teachings pertaining to spiritual life and to up-lift man from his animal-like life to a higher status, none of them pays any attention now to spiritual practices nor has anybody any love for or faith in the true Creator and spiritual life. It can be imagined how difficult it is in such conditions to create a desire in the minds of the common people for the teachings of true *paramartha* and for the performance of internal practices of devotion and how far the desire of Satsangi brothers that the teachings of Merciful Radhasoami should as early as possible reach the masses and penetrate to their hearts is justified and correct. Truly speaking, it is quite impossible to accomplish this hard task merely through human efforts.

It would be something if Satsangi brothers, by their own efforts, are able to continue to adhere to the ideals of the Religion of Saints. Immediate diversion of the attention of the masses from worldly enjoyments towards spiritual life or spiritual bliss can be possible only through the mercy and grace of the true Supreme Being Himself.

It is true that every devotee is filled with pity on seeing his brethren involved unnecessarily in difficulties and going astray from the True Path but one feels pity also on seeing many sick, poor and destitute people involved in troubles. In that case what does a man do beyond giving comfort to the unhappy people in accordance with his means. Similarly, it is advisable in the former case as well to help others by explaining to them religious matters according as one has the ability to do so and from time to time, to pray internally in the Feet of Merciful Radhasoami for His mercy and blessings and leave the matter to His *Mauj*[1] (will), for after all the *Jivas*[2] are the children of the Merciful Lord Himself and nobody can be more solicitous for the good of His children than He ? As a matter of fact, all the *Jivas* are advancing on the path of progress. Some are ahead of others and some lag behind, but this is all due to the difference in *samskaras* of different individuals. It would be presumptuous to assume that human efforts can bring about a sudden change in the *samskaras* of the people. For this, time is needed i e. this change can come about only gradually.

DISCOURSE 49

TWO DIFFICULTIES OF THE SEEKERS

There are many persons who have not joined the Radhasoami Faith but have great respect and regard in their

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1 Vide Note 2 on page 38. 2. Vide Note 1 on page 21

hearts for the discourses of the Saints and also the teachings of Merciful Radhasoami. On enquiry it has been found that these good people had certain difficulties which could be removed easily, but as they did not come across anybody who could explain matters to them properly, they have remained deprived so far of the benefit of the teachings of Merciful Radhasoami. Proper advice is given here concerning their difficulties.

Their first difficulty is that though these people are sincerely desirous of learning the devotional practices and of performing them, they do not like to join any sect or to be called its followers. In other words, they desire that they be taught the devotional practices in a way so that they may not have to join the Radhasoami Satsang and may not be called the followers of the Radhasoami Faith. The apparent reason for this desire appears to be that as the followers of the Radhasoami Faith are at present very small in number and ignorant and selfish people have given currency to certain absurd things about this Faith and have to some extent given it a somewhat bad name, they wish to avoid being subjected to unnecessary enquiries. But it should be remembered that even if their desire be fulfilled by disclosing the methods of devotion to them secretly, it would not be possible for them to continue the practices satisfactorily in future. When they start performing the practices, they would again and again meet with difficulties in the way and to overcome them they would have to consult again and again and for this purpose they would necessarily have to establish close contact with the Satsang. Had the position been such that on once learning the methods of practice, their future progress could have continued automatically, they could of course have easily pulled on, but the difficulty is that the situation is just the contrary. If there is really a true seeker and he has also a true desire to take up the right path and awaken his spiritual faculties and to get *darśana* of Supreme Father, the true Creator, and if uninfluenced by greed and without being

subjected to any pressure he sincerely feels that his heart's desire could be fulfilled by following the holy teachings of Merciful Radhasoami, we would like to ask him if it is not proper for him to ignore the taunts of the fools in order to be able to accomplish such a holy task or to make such a profitable bargain.

Besides, it should also be considered how religious sects are founded in the world. Whenever the Supreme Being is mercifully pleased to shower his grace, *Nirmana Chitta*[1] spirits appear in the world in the form of *Rishis*, *Sadhs*, Saints and *Mahatmas* and give solace through their noble teachings to those who are afflicted and to those who are fond of *paramartha*, and disclose to them the way and the method of crossing the Great Ocean of the world (*Sansar Sagar*[2]) and reaching higher blissful planes and the Pure Spiritual Region. Worldly-minded people hear their discourses and make fun of them but some *śamskari*[3] *jivas* are deeply influenced by the teachings of the Saints and they become their disciples. These *samskari jivas* perform practices according to instructions and in a short period obtain internally irrefutable proofs about the

1. Ordinary Jīvas born in the world get bodies and minds in accordance with and as a result of their past 'karmas' under the influence of which they have to take birth here, but when Great Souls take their birth here, they do not get their bodies and minds as a result of their past karmas, as they have no 'karmas' to account for and they take birth only to fulfil some divine purpose or under orders of the Lord. Thus they themselves create their 'mind' or 'chitta' as they like and so they are known as 'Nirmāna Chitta' i e who have themselves made their own 'chitta' Sage Kapil, the author of Sāmkhya Darśana is said to have been such a 'Nirmāna Chitta' Purusha. 2 In Hindu religion and in the Religion of Saints this world and man's life in it are often compared to an ocean difficult to cross It is also called 'Bhava Sagar', for which see Note 2 on page 81. 3. For the word 'Samskāra', see Note 2 on page 20. Samskāras are said to be both good and bad according to the good and bad effect that they produce on a man's nature Normally the word 'Samskāri' would mean one who has 'Samskāras', but actually it means one who has good 'Samskāras'.

truth of the teachings. So they devote themselves to their service with great fervour and enthusiasm and they praise and talk highly to their dear ones, relations and friends about the Holy Person through whose help and grace they gained these extraordinary experiences and in this way a big circle of devotees is by and by formed round those Great Personalities and one after the other hundreds and thousands become his disciples and thus a 'sect' is established. What is this 'sect'? This 'sect' is in reality a community whose centre is such a Holy Personality, who has no worldly desires and impurities, whose spiritual faculties are wide awake and who is internally in communion with *Brahma*, or *Para-Brahma* or *Satya Purush* or the Supreme Being and whose members are such blessed people as have turned away from the world and have set their hearts on awakening their spiritual faculties and obtaining the *darśana* of the true Supreme Being and who, having practically performed to some extent the devotional practices, have gained irrefutable internal proofs about the truth of the instructions given by the Chief Personality of that community and also already mentioned in their holy books by the Great Leaders of all other religions. It needs no mention that the Chief Personality had never desired that some particular sect be formed, nor did any person make any efforts in that direction. But as his teachings were different from the ideas of the people of the world and as these teachings were liked by *samskari* devotees and the ordinary people were not able to appreciate them properly or value them, the result was that *samskari* devotees of their own accord separated from the general public and gathered round the Central Figure of the Great Personality and thus a group or sect of the people holding certain special opinions came into existence of its own accord. Under these circumstances, it is obviously improper to entertain any misgivings or raise any objections in one's heart about the formation of the sect. It would never be possible that the whole world may all at once accept the teachings of a holy person. The number of such persons who accept his teachings would necessarily

be small in the beginning and also for a considerable time thereafter, and these people would continue to be given the name of a separate sect. Naturally therefore every keen seeker would have to join that sect in order to quench his thirst for true *paramartha*. Of course, if at any time, the Central Figure disappears from the sect and no person who knows the internal practices is left, it would be entirely useless and improper to leave one's previous faith and join that new sect.

Now we deal with the second difficulty of the seekers

Their second difficulty is that it is generally said that it is a sin to give up one Guru and adopt another Guru For instance, the Sikh Gurus have stated—

एक छोड़ दूजा गहे, डूबे से बंजारिया ।

Ek chhōr dūjā gahe, dūbe se banjāriā.

Translation —

The action of a man who leaves off one Guru and accepts another is like that of a *Banjara*[1] who moves from place to place.

They therefore argue that as they are the disciples of the Sikh Gurus or of those who now occupy their *gaddis*[2], how could they accept the protection of Merciful Radhasoami ? This difficulty also is based on ignorance. There is no doubt that if a man comes into contact with a true Guru, it is then proper for him to withdraw his attention from all sides and carry out His instructions and apply himself with full faith to the performance of the devotional practices taught by the Guru. But if one has been able to meet only an imperfect Guru, i.e. he has taken the protection of a Guru who has

1. 'Banjārās' are a class of nomads in India who earn their livelihood by doing odd jobs for the people They move about from place to place with their families and possessions. 2. The word 'gaddī' refers to the position formerly occupied by any Guru or Saint

not achieved communion with the true Supreme Being or if he had met a perfect Guru but the latter has departed and is no more and his own aim has not yet been fulfilled, then in both these cases it is desirable for a zealous *Paramarthi* to search for a perfect and living Guru and on coming into contact with Him he should place full faith and trust in Him. It should be remembered that the status of Guru can be accorded to those Holy Persons only who have attained communion with the true Supreme Being and who stay in the world only to show the path to those seekers who aspire to obtain the *darśana* of the Supreme Being The protection of such a Great Personality is not sought merely to fulfil a custom, but the aim is that an ardent *Paramarthi* may be able to receive instruction and help from Him and reach the desired goal in his life-time i.e acquire the same status as He has. If anybody has become the disciple of an imperfect Guru, the latter is neither entitled to be called a Guru nor has He the status of a Guru. Naturally therefore protection of such a person is not the protection of a true Guru, and in such a case the devotee has full permission that on meeting the Perfect and True Guru, he should seek the latter's protection. In the same way, on the departure of one Guru, an ardent *Paramarthi* has got full permission to search afresh for a new living Guru if by that time his object has not been achieved. The perfect Gurus are all one and the same, they differ in their physical bodies only. Their spiritual essence and status are the same. Thus taking the protection of another Perfect Guru on the departure of a Perfect Guru, is only nominally changing from one Guru to another, as the internal spiritual connection continues to be the same. Therefore in this case also, the objection of 'leaving one and adopting another' does not apply to the case of an ardent *Paramarthi*.

The seekers should know that if the sentence of the Holy *Granth* referred to above had the meaning as ordinary people ascribe to it, practice in the time of Sikh Gurus would not have been contrary to it. History tells us that after the

departure of Guru Nanak Sahab the entire community of his disciples, except only some obstinate people, put their faith in Guru Angad and on the departure of Guru Angad, in Guru Amar Das, and in the same way in successive Gurus after him and nobody ever imagined then that Guru Nanak[1], Guru Angad[2] and Guru Amar Das[3] were different personages, but every sensible Sikh held this same belief and even now millions of sensible Sikhs believe that the same Light or Ray was functioning in all the Gurus and there was difference in their bodies only. In Sikh history there is mention of a notable figure i.e. Baba Buddha He had first become the disciple of Guru Nanak and as he remained alive in the time of many Gurus, he had the good fortune of putting *Tilak*[4] on the fore-heads of the Gurus at their installation ceremony. If it had been objectionable to put faith in other Gurus after Guru Nanak, Baba Buddha would have been the most undesirable person, but as history tells us, all the Sikhs held this venerable person in very high esteem and in matters of devotion their views were always the same as his.

The critic puts forth his further objection that on receiving the news that the disciple has taken to the protection of another Guru, the first Guru who has departed would surely be displeased and would feel that this fellow who had showed so much devotion and *Bhakti*[5] in his time and on whom he had showered so much kindness has now turned ungrateful and has begun to beg at another door. This idea of the critic has also got no sense, first because when true Gurus depart from this world, they sever all their connection with

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1. Vide Note 1 on page 48. 2 The second Guru of the Sikhs He succeeded Guru Nanak 3. The third Guru of the Sikhs. He succeeded Guru Angad 4. Saffron mark applied to the forehead This custom is in vogue in India since very ancient times Such marks are put on the foreheads of kings, Saints etc by their followers and of those to whom one may be dearly attached e g. sister puts 'tilak' on the forehead of brother, wife on that of the husband and so on. 5 Vide Note 1 on page 10

this world, as their departure from this world takes place only when the mission for which they had made their advent here is accomplished. If, on return from here, they entertain thoughts about the people of this world, it will have to be admitted that they had not attained their own salvation. As a matter of fact, on return from the world these Great Souls enter the state from which they had come and have no connection left with the world thereafter. Secondly, even if the first Guru comes to know of it, he would be extremely pleased to know that such and such disciple of his is as before following the path of *paramartha* and is in the protection of the living Guru.

True Gurus are not jealous of each other.

DISCOURSE 50

THE NEED OF SEVA (SERVICE)

There is no community or country in the world where all its members or inhabitants fulfil their worldly needs by their own exertions but it is observed that the larger number of people lead their lives depending on the labour of the few. People well-versed in the principles of economics know well that producers of wealth are only those people who produce raw materials out of the earth by their manual labour or manufacture valuable and useful articles from them by using their intellect. Hence all the cultivators, miners and forest-growers who put in labour and produce raw materials like corn, fruit, flowers, cotton, timber, iron, coal and resinous materials etc. and also spinners, weavers, rubber and hardware manufacturers are all counted as wealth-producing members of the society. Besides these, there are others who themselves do not produce raw materials or manufacture articles but help the producers, as for example, carpenters

and blacksmiths who manufacture ploughs and other implements for cultivators, dyers and washermen, reapers, cowherds and cattle-keepers etc. etc. These people also, in one respect, are wealth-producers, because without their help people of the first category are not able to produce wealth. In addition to these two classes of people, there is another class, whose existence in every country is absolutely necessary and who come in very useful for the wealth-producers. They are the traders who by exporting the goods of one place to another create a market or demand for the producers and manufacturers. It would be very difficult for the producers of raw materials to be able to live and the manufactured goods would also have no value if there were no traders. Besides these, there are physicians, doctors, *Vaidyas*, army personnel, policemen etc. who protect the life and property of the general public and thus make themselves serviceable and useful to the country. It is noticed that most of the people engaged in these occupations lead lives of average standard and a few of them only are well-to-do or rich. Wealth remains mostly in the possession of those who are big merchants or who arrange for the interchange of wealth produced by others or who manage the wealth and property of others and who have the privilege under the law to make changes in market rates and also to arrange transfers of wealth and property as they like. These persons and also the thieves, the dacoits, the sick, the old, the cripples, the beggars, the children, womenfolk and the employees in services etc. are those members of the society for whose maintenance the people of every country have perforce to make arrangements and it was in view of this that it was stated in the beginning of this Discourse that there are only a few persons in every country or society who maintain themselves by their own labour. Now, if this idea is correct, it would naturally be quite impossible for all the members of any society to live unless there is a sufficient number of such persons in that society as can support themselves by their hard labour and

also support ten to twenty others. Besides this, it can also be inferred that the number of persons living on the income earned by others can be small only in that society, the majority of whose members consider that the only right and proper thing for them is to live on the income earned by their own labour. The Government of India estimated (in 1928) in various ways the *per capita* income in India and have determined that every Indian earns Rs 36/- per annum on an average, i.e. Rs 3/-per mensem. As compared to this, every American earns on an average Rs. 1000/- per annum. This shows the big difference in the income of the inhabitants of the two countries This is the reason why India is in the grip of poverty and men of good families are heard praising their luck if they get employment on a few rupees per mensem and why the economic condition of the residents of India is going from bad to worse day by day. Obviously, the Satsang community is not free from the calamity which has overtaken the whole of India and it is getting more and more difficult for *Satsangi* brothers to make provision for their needs. When we see *Satsangi* brothers in this condition, there appear to be only two courses open to us i.e. we either refuse to take into consideration the condition of the general Satsang public and leave them to solve their difficulties by themselves; or we devise ways and means by which the *per capita* income of the Satsang community may increase. Old habits, indolence and selfishness suggest that we need not worry about others, that everything would automatically come right when Merciful Radhasoami so pleases and therefore there is no reason why we should take the burden of the world on our shoulders. But brotherly affection and sympathy suggest that personal comfort and gain be left out of consideration to some extent and ways and means be devised so that our unhappy brothers may be rid of unnecessary worries. As we naturally prefer the second alternative out of the two, therefore we leave aside ideas of selfishness and indolence and feel compelled to put forward a few

and blacksmiths who manufacture ploughs and other implements for cultivators, dyers and washermen, reapers, cowherds and cattle-keepers etc. etc. These people also, in one respect, are wealth-producers, because without their help people of the first category are not able to produce wealth. In addition to these two classes of people, there is another class, whose existence in every country is absolutely necessary and who come in very useful for the wealth-producers. They are the traders who by exporting the goods of one place to another create a market or demand for the producers and manufacturers. It would be very difficult for the producers of raw materials to be able to live and the manufactured goods would also have no value if there were no traders. Besides these, there are physicians, doctors, *Vaidyas*, army personnel, policemen etc. who protect the life and property of the general public and thus make themselves serviceable and useful to the country. It is noticed that most of the people engaged in these occupations lead lives of average standard and a few of them only are well-to-do or rich. Wealth remains mostly in the possession of those who are big merchants or who arrange for the interchange of wealth produced by others or who manage the wealth and property of others and who have the privilege under the law to make changes in market rates and also to arrange transfers of wealth and property as they like. These persons and also the thieves, the dacoits, the sick, the old, the cripples, the beggars, the children, womenfolk and the employees in services etc. are those members of the society for whose maintenance the people of every country have perforce to make arrangements and it was in view of this that it was stated in the beginning of this Discourse that there are only a few persons in every country or society who maintain themselves by their own labour. Now, if this idea is correct, it would naturally be quite impossible for all the members of any society to live unless there is a sufficient number of such persons in that society as can support themselves by their hard labour and

Satsangi brothers meet among themselves, none should ever think of taking any unfair advantage of the relationship of Satsang. If any *Satsangi* finds himself in some difficulty, he should, as far as possible, act with proper self-control and should not trouble any other *Satsangi* brother for his own sake and if he is compelled by circumstances to seek help from some brother, he should, with apologies, put his need before him and keep his demand as low as possible But if any *Satsangi* comes to know that another *Satsangi* is in trouble, he should not wait for the brother in trouble to approach him and seek his help but should at once do whatever is necessary to help him and if in this connection he has to undergo some discomfort or loss in body, mind and wealth, he should not mind it. This does not mean that he should tell lies or swear falsely in witness-box or uselessly shed blood to help him. The idea is that he should, while keeping Satsang principles in mind, help the brother in distress in a suitable manner as far as his means permit.

It should be borne in mind that until this kind of relationship based on selfless love is established in the Satsang community, selfishness and discord which hold sway over the Indian masses, would never be eradicated and without getting rid of these evils, it would be impossible to launch any large scale scheme to provide for the financial needs of *Satsangis*. The sooner this advice is accepted and acted upon by *Satsangi* brothers, the better.

It is true it is not so easy to learn this lesson and to act upon it as would appear from what has been said above, because the lesson of sincere love for others, without any selfish motive and without any apparent reason, appears to be a bitter cup when one finds that other people gain their ends by acting in a selfish manner and are apparently happy and pleased and also free from care and anxieties. One should however remember that the hearts of selfish people are always very narrow and full of ignorance, that they do

not get peace and comfort even for a moment and the teachings of true *paramartha* produce very little effect on their minds. In short, selfish persons are absolutely unsuited for religious practices. *Satsangi* brothers should therefore drink this apparently bitter cup knowing that it is a bitter medicine that kills the disease. Mutual love can lead to the building up of such strength that no worldly obstacles can come in the way and such mutual trust can be created as would leave no room for mutual quarrels and dissensions and we can speed up the pace of our progress to such an extent that the task requiring years for its completion can be accomplished in days.

The second suggestion is that *Satsangi* brothers should deposit their surplus funds at one place and spend them on schemes relating to the fulfilment of their needs. In a publication relating to Economics, it is mentioned that some poor weavers of a town in England collected some capital and established a store and the subscribers took the vow that they would purchase from that store the articles available in it. In the beginning, arrangements were made to sell only three articles and these three articles were probably sugar, tea and flour These articles were sold in the Store at a fixed profit. By and by, all the people of the town began to purchase these things from this Store and the management of the Store felt encouraged to arrange for the supply of other necessaries of life in addition to these three things. The present position, after the lapse of many years, is that this Store has now (in 1928) got goods worth crores of rupees and ten or eleven branches of the Store are working in various cities. *Satsangi* brothers can take a lesson from this example and can easily make arrangements of this nature in Dayalbagh Within a few years there can be so much income from this arrangement that not only Dayalbagh institutions can be run easily but new institutions of this kind can be established in various provinces. By grace, *Satsangi* brothers are generally honest and it should

not be difficult for them to run such a store or to establish Satsang institutions at different places.

The third suggestion is that every *Satsangi* brother should compel his children to obtain proficiency in some art or craft. This age is suited for progress by those persons only who are experts in arts and crafts. These are the persons who discover valuable secrets for their countries. The expert who breaks the seal on the secrets of nature and places them before his countrymen or who studies the laws of nature and puts forward schemes for controlling and utilizing the hidden forces, best serves his country and his nation, nay the whole human race. It is true that everybody cannot be an expert of some art or craft, but it is also true that unless thousands and lacs of men make efforts to become experts, proper atmosphere for the creation of experts cannot be engendered, and if by the efforts of thousands and lacs of people even one youngman becomes an expert or an expert in some art or craft is produced, it can be stated without exaggeration that the labour of thousands and lacs of people will be more than compensated in a very short time.

The fourth suggestion is that the arrangement for the education and up-bringing of *Satsangi* children should be entrusted to the Radhasoami Satsang Sabha[1] and every *Satsangi* brother should quite willingly and cheerfully help the *Sabha* to carry out this desirable object and make sacrifices according to his means. The education and up-bringing of children is a matter of grave responsibility and it is not possible for everybody to bring up children in keeping with the needs of the times. If this *seva* is entrusted to selected and capable *Satsangi* brothers, there would not only be satisfactory arrangement for the betterment of the future generation, but

1. 'Radhasoami Satsang Sabha' is the name of the representative society established by Satsangis for looking after the religious and charitable activities of the Satsang Community

Satsangi brothers of the present generation also would be considerably relieved.

The question however is whether the Satsang community can act according to these four suggestions? Our reply is that if a community of true *paramarthis* cannot act on these principles based on the maxim 'Self help is the best help', then no other society in the world can derive any benefit from these four suggestions.

DISCOURSE 51

WHAT IS MEANT BY ANŚA AND ANŚI DOCTRINE[1]?

According to the Radhasoami Faith the relation between the *Surat*[2] or *Atma* i.e. the spirit-entity and Merciful Radhasoami i.e. the true Supreme Being is that of *Anś* (part) which the *Surat* is and *Anśi* (the whole) which Merciful Radhasoami is. This shows that the essence of both the spirit and the Supreme Being is the same and when the spirit gets free from the bonds of mind and matter i.e. on returning to its own original pure spiritual condition, the spirit loses its individuality as rivers and rivulets do on entering the sea, i.e. as long as they flow on land individually, they are called rivers and rivulets and they have separate names and forms but when they enter the sea, they lose their names and forms and their water assumes the form of the sea. It should be remembered that the analogy of rivers, rivulets and the sea does not apply in every

1. 'Anśa' means a part or an emanation just as a ray is an 'anśa' of the sun All the rays of the sun are 'anśas' of the sun and the sun is the 'Anśī' (i e the source or reservoir) of the rays. The doctrine that the spirit or Ātmā is the 'anśa' and the Supreme Being is the 'Anśī' is known as the 'Anśa and Anśī' or 'Anśānśī' doctrine. The doctrine explains the relationship between the spirit of man and the Supreme Being. 2 Vide Note 3 on page 33.

respect to the case of the spirit in its pure state, because water is gross and the spirit and the true Supreme Being are purely spiritual essence. Naturally therefore, in illustrating the state of the spiritual essence by the analogy of material objects, the defects of the attributes of gross objects unnecessarily come in In considering this analogy only one aspect of the analogy is to be kept in view and it is that the rivers and rivulets lose their name and form when they join the sea and their water becomes one with the water of the sea.

Some people interpret the word '*Anśa*' (part) as a 'part' or 'piece' and while thinking of a 'piece', think of a piece of wood or a drop of water and then raise the objection that in view of the teachings of the Radhasoami Faith, it would have to be admitted that the true Supreme Being can be divided into 'parts' or 'pieces' or in other words, it would have to be admitted that when the creation came into being through the manifestation of so many spirits (*Atmas*) which are now observed as having assumed bodies in the creation, the Supreme Being was broken up into innumerable pieces. But as has been hinted above, this objection arises only because we overlook the difference between the spirit essence and gross matter. If while trying to form a conception about the '*Anśa*' the case of the rays of the sun is taken into consideration instead of that of a piece of wood or a drop of water and the mutual relationship between the sun (which is '*Anśi*', or the Reservoir) and the ray of the sun (which is an '*Anśa*') is kept in view, the doubts about the Supreme Being having been divided up into innumerable parts on the manifestation of the spirits can be easily removed. But it should be clearly understood that the spiritual essence is far far subtler than even the rays of the sun, so unless a person has some actual experience of the spiritual region, his conception about the spiritual essence is bound to be essentially wrong. Thus it should not be difficult to understand that the spirit, even though it is called an '*Anśa*' (part) of the Supreme Being is under no circumstances to be taken as separate from the

Supreme Being and the only change that has come about on the manifestation of the creation is that the spirit is now more inclined outwards, i e. towards gross matter but the internal subtle link of the spirit with the Supreme Being still subsists and was never broken and the meaning of salvation or *moksha*[1] is only that the inclination of the spirit, which is like a ray, be turned inwards towards its Source, the Supreme Being, which is like the Sun.

On hearing this teaching of the Religion of Saints, even the most miserable and destitute person feels very greatly strengthened and all physical and mental troubles begin to appear to him quite trivial and insignificant and he feels encouraged to entertain the desire that he may, by performing proper practices, leave the present '*Jiva*' state, traverse the intermediate stages and attain, as soon as possible, the pure spiritual condition or state which is the real condition of the spirit. He can also understand that the extreme praise which is bestowed on a *Sadh*, Saint or *Satguru*[2] in the Religion of Saints or the Radhasoami Faith is quite justified and proper because the Person, who by extricating himself from the physical and mental bonds i e. by subduing the body and the mind, has attained the consciousness of the spiritual plane in place of that of the mental plane or in other words, whose condition is like that of the rivulet which has entered the sea, or the ray which, instead of shining outwards, has returned to its sun, is not different in any way from the True Supreme Being.

But when they listen to this kind of talk, many persons who do not understand the real position vehemently assert that *Atma* can in no circumstances become *Paramatma*. But who has ever said that *Atma* becomes *Paramatma*? The teachings of the Radhasoami Faith are that a drop on entering

1 'Mōksha' means liberation or salvation. It is the most commonly used word for the ultimate goal of human existence 2. Vide Note 2 on page 12.

the sea does not remain a drop but becomes one with the sea and not that the drop itself becomes the sea. Doctor Thibaut[1] and Max Muller[2], in their comments on the *Vedanta Sutras*[3] have come to the conclusion that the correct meaning of *Sutra*[4] 43, *Pada* 3, *Adhyaya* 2 is the same as given by Sri Ramanuja[5]. The meaning given by Shri Ramanuja is that *Atma* (*Jiva*) is *Anśa* of *Brahma*.

Besides this, Lord Krishna has thrown light on this point in the *Bhagvad Gita*. He has stated in *Śloka* 7 of *Adhyaya* 15 that His own *Anśa* comes as immortal *Jiva* in this world and attracts towards himself the senses, which exist in the Universe. These senses include the mind called the sixth sense[6]. In this *Śloka* Lord Krishna has described Himself as *Anśi* (*Brahma*) or the Reservoir and *Jiva* as His *Anśa* or part.

Apart from this, brothers who have pondered over the '*Tat tvam asi*' doctrine of the *Upanishads* and have studied the ideas of *Rishis* about this doctrine would be able to say with

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1 A well-known Indologist 2. Friedrich Max Muller (1833-1902), a famous German scholar who was Professor of Comparative Philosophy at the Oxford University for a long time. He translated many Sanskrit books into English and published them in the series 'Sacred Books of the East'. He also edited the Vedas 3 The 'Uttara Mīmānsā' is one of the six Darśanas of Indian Philosophy. It is also known as the 'Vedānta', because it deals with the philosophy dealt with in the last portion of the Vedas i.e the Upanishads or because it is the ultimate knowledge or essense of the Vedas The Vedānta Darśana is also known as 'Vedānta Sūtras'. The author was Bādarāyana Vyāsa 4 The original Sūtra is —

अ शोनानाव्यपदेशादन्यथा चापि दाशकितवादित्वमधीयत एके (II-3-43)

Anśōnānāvyapadeśādanyathā chāpi dāśakitavāditvamadhīyata eke (II-3-43)

5. Śri Rāmānuja or Rāmānujāchārya was born in South India in 1073 and passed away in 1194 A.D. He wrote commentaries on the Gītā and the Vedānta Sūtras and also wrote three other books on Vedānta 6. The original text is —

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूत सनातन
मन· षष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति । (१५—७)

Mamaivānśō jīvalōke jīvabhūtah sanātanah
Manah shashṭhānīndriyāṇi prakṛtisthāni karshati (XV-7)

confidence that in ancient times, the followers and the teachers of *Vedic Dharma* and the *Rishis* who understood the real meaning of the *Vedas*, also held the same view.

The meanings given to the phrase '*Tat tvam asi*' are 'That thou art' or 'That be thou'. Whichever of the two meanings is taken as correct, the only conclusion is that the *Jiva* or *Atma* existing within man, can acquire the status of *Brahma* or can attain the *Brahma* state.

When *Śvetaketu* returned form the Gurukul after twelve years' study and began to boast about his knowledge, his father *Rishi Uddalaka* spoke to him thus : "*Śvetaketu* ! you are so very proud of your knowledge but have you learnt the lesson by which all that is 'unheard of' becomes 'heard of', all that is 'not understood' becomes 'as already understood' and 'the unknown' becomes 'as the known ?' " '*Śvetaketu* was surprised and enquired "What kind of teaching is that ?" *Uddalaka* replied—"Look, by knowing a lump of clay, one can form a conception of every article of clay and by knowing an ingot of gold, one can form a conception of every article of gold and by knowing a nail-cutter made of iron, one can form a conception of every article of iron. The teaching I have referred to is of this type." On hearing it, *Śvetaketu* replied—"Undoubtedly, my Preceptor could not have known that teaching, for had he known it, he must have taught the same to me." Hence he requested the *Rishi* kindly to explain to him that. On this, *Rishi Uddalaka* cited many examples and explained to *Śvetaketu* that the reality (*Sad Vastu*[1]) which exists in this world and which is sustaining everything in a subtle way, is the *Atma* and he also was the same. This anecdote has been mentioned in *Chhandogya Upanishad* in great detail[2].

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1. 'Sad' or 'Sat' means 'true'. 'Sad vastu' thus means 'real thing' or 'reality'. 2. The anecdote is given in the 6th Prapāthaka of the Chhandōgya Upanishad Chhandōgya Upanishad pertains to the Sāma-Veda and forms the major portion of the Chhandōgya Brāhmana.

DISCOURSE 52

COMFORT LIES IN WORK

Everybody desires that he should get facilities of every kind in carrying on his affairs in the world and if possible he may not have to worry at all about himself and his relations and all his needs may be satisfied without any effort on his part or others should satisfy them. It is a matter of regret that many *Satsangi* brothers also are victims of such ideas. Some of them say that when they have taken the protection of Merciful Radhasoami, it is His duty to remove all their difficulties and satisfy all their needs. Some others think that the only thing they need do is to leave their house and go to the Satsang, and that their duty is only to take protection and after they have done so, their needs would be satisfied by the Satsang. They assert that on joining the Satsang they get the right to claim that they should not have to worry about anything at all and others should arrange all things for them. And it is surprising that ideas of this kind are so deeply rooted in the hearts of these simple brothers that they cannot be removed easily It is evident that the community in which this class of people predominate would in a short time begin to decline in every way. Most of the food taken by man, after being digested, is converted into blood and the increase of blood leads to increase of the energy in the body If this energy is not used properly, i.e. if it is not used up in moving hands, feet or other parts of the body, it begins to give rise to evil thoughts on account of which man easily falls a victim to evil ways of life and by and by his digestion gets impaired and various poisons begin to form inside the body which produce diseases of different kinds. Goldsmith has said at one place (in 'the Deserted Village')—

> "Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

In other words, the country in which wealth accumulates suffers a great calamity and it soons falls a victim to evils and its people begin to degenerate. These ease-lovers are not prepared to have any cut in their comforts even though the country may go to dogs and the people may be destroyed, and all spiritual and worldly values may be cast aside and the object of man's existence may remain unfulfilled ! It should be remembered that as long as the protective hand of Merciful Radhasoami rests on the head of the Satsang Community, poisonous thoughts of this kind would not be allowed to establish themselves permanently in the Satsang circle and thousands of ways would be adopted for their eradication.

On this a further question can be put :—

"Is it then meant that there would be no relief even on coming under the protection of Merciful Radhasoami or on taking up residence in the Satsang premises ? The reply is that on sincerely accepting the protection of the True Supreme Being, the devotee automatically gets real solace and there can be no occasion for questions of this nature arising in his heart. Questions of this kind arise only in the hearts of those who take protection only in name. It is for consideration that when any devotee believes that the true Supreme Being Merciful Radhasoami has taken him under His protection and when he knows that the Supreme Being is the Reservoir of prime energy, intelligence and bliss, naturally he would feel in his mind that it is improper for him, after taking protection of such an Almighty Being, to worry about his needs. He would feel that the only proper thing for him to do is to perform his religious and worldly duties like an obedient son and to leave the result in all circumstances to the Will of Merciful Radhasoami and to direct his attention inwardly to His Feet and that whatever transpires through the Will of the Merciful Lord would be for his benefit as there is none who is more omnipotent, more intelligent and

a greater benefactor than Him. He also feels that if, inspite of his proper efforts, the result is against expectations, he is not to blame and he could possibly do nothing more. He feels that though the result is apparently against him, but in reality it would prove to be ultimately beneficial to him, because it could not be that as long as the mercy of the True Supreme Being was available to him and there was no default on his part in the performance of his duties, harm should come to him. The following couplet of Kabir Sahab would then automatically rush to his lips:—

मैं सेवक समरत्थ का कभी न होय अकाज।
पतिब्रता नॉगी रहै वाहि पती को लाज॥

Main sewak samratth kā kabhī na hōye akāj,
Patibratā nāngī rahe wāhi patī kō lāj

Translation —

I am a servant of the Almighty;
no harm can come to me.
If the virtuous wife remains naked,
her husband would feel ashamed

On understanding the purport of the couplet, worry and anxiety and thoughts of sorrow and grief would at once vanish from his mind and feelings of peace, contentment, hope and love would fill his heart.

Besides this, one should also consider that the facilities, which these ease-loving brothers expect from Merciful Radhasoami and the Satsang, are not available even to kings in the world. It is true that kings have no worries about needs of the kind which worry the poor people and men of ordinary status but they are worried for the satisfaction of needs far bigger and far more acute and which cannot even be imagined by ordinary people. In these circumstances, it is quite improper for *Satsangi* brothers to hope for leading a life of ease. If any brother wants to escape the troubles of

the world, he should first curtail his wants. By curtailing his wants, he would easily be able to get rid of unnecessary worries of various kinds and he would be free to spend his time as he may desire. Secondly, it is necessary for him to make efforts like an able and efficient person to satisfy his remaining (i e. reasonable) wants The result of adopting this mode of life would be that he would have very few occasions to be disturbed by thoughts which would trouble him in his *paramartha* and his worldly and *paramarthi*[1] needs would be easily satisfied and poverty, failure and indolence would never trouble him.

DISCOURSE 53

NECESSITY OF A LIVING GURU

Very great stress has been laid in the Religion of Saints on Guru Bhakti[2] i.e. devotion to the Guru. Param Guru Swamiji Maharaj[3] has said :—

पिरथम सीढ़ी है गुरुभक्ती ।
गुरुभक्ती बिन काज न रत्ती ।।

"Pirtham Sīrhī hai Guru-bhaktī,
Guru-bhaktī bin kāj na rattī

Translation —

The first step is Devotion of the Guru,
Without Devotion of the Guru, no spiritual progress is possible.

1. i e pertaining to paramārtha or necessary for the achievement of paramārtha 2 'Guru Bhakti' means 'Devotion to the Guru' For 'Bhakti' see Note 1 on page 10 'Bhakti' includes faith, worship and love 'Guru' means One who removes ignorance. The word 'Guru' is commonly used in India for a spiritual teacher. 3. Vide Note 1 on page 9. The quotation is from Sar Bachan (poetry), one of the two books by the Founder.

Devotion to the Guru (*Guru Bhakti*) is, according to the teachings of the Religion of Saints, the first step to achieve the objective or the desired goal of *paramartha* and there cannot be the least progress without *Guru Bhakti*. But everybody knows that it is not the Religion of Saints alone which teaches *Guru Bhakti* but many other religions also, which are known as religions of the *Bhakti Marga*, have emphasized the importance of devotion to the Guru. Hence crores of people are engaged in their own way in devotion (*Bhakti*) to their Gurus, *Murshids*[1], Incarnations[2] and Prophets. Great stress is however laid in the Religion of Saints on the fact that the devotion (*Bhakti*) should be the devotion of the living and the Perfect Guru[3]. No benefit can be derived from the devotion (*Bhakti*) of the Gurus of the past who are not alive i e. who are not present in human form or from the devotion of persons, whether they are dead or are still alive, who have not reached the destination and are not perfect. Param Guru Swamiji Maharaj has said[4] :—

गुरु तू पूरा ढूँढ़, तेरे भले की कहूँ।
पिछलों की तज टेक, तेरे भले की कहूँ।
वक़्त गुरू को मान, तेरे भले की कहूँ।

Guru tū pūrā dhūnḍh, tere bhale kī kahūn,
Pichhlōn kī taj tek, tere bhale kī kahūn,
Waqt Gurū kō mān, tere bhale kī kahūn

Translation —

I wish you well and suggest that you should search the Perfect Guru, that you should leave off depending on the Gurus of the past and that you should place your faith in the living Guru.

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1. 'Murshid', a Persian synonym of 'Guru' Among Sufis, devotion to the Murshid is very greatly emphasized, just as in the Religion of Saints
2. The Hindi word is 'Avatāra'. It literally means 'One who has descended' i e. 'One who has descended to earth from higher regions'.
3 'Perfect Guru' means 'Guru' who has reached the highest region (Abode of Supreme Being). 4. This is again from Sār Bachan (Poetry).

According to the teachings of the Religion of Saints, it is the duty of every seeker that he should spend a portion of his life in searching for the true Guru before he engages in performing worship of any kind or begins to follow any path or Faith. In fact, it has been said that even if the whole of a man's life is spent in search without meeting a true Guru, there is no harm. The seeker would be reborn in human form in his next birth and he would then be able to meet the true Satguru[1] also. In other religious communities the worship and devotion of the Guru, *Murshid*, Incarnations etc. is resorted to as a matter of routine but the teachings of the Religion of Saints regarding the search for a living Guru are disregarded. Thus Hindus, Muslims and Christians are engaged in the devotion of such Holy Persons whom they have never themselves seen and whom it is wholly impossible for them to meet in the present circumstances, while those who understand the importance of a living Guru or *Murshid* have, without making a full enquiry, become devotees of some Guru who has inherited the position by blood-relationship[2] or otherwise or are devoted to some *Sadhu*[3], *Brahman* or *Maulvi*[4] etc. whose conduct and bearing appear to be uncommon or unusual to some extent or who can deliver good discourses about spiritual knowledge or contemplation etc. or those who can do good by an amulet[5] a charm, a *mantra*[6] or a prayer when someone is in trouble.

The teaching of the Religion of Saints that the Guru should be a living one and also perfect is based on a high religious principle. If the Guru is alive, first of all the seeker can test him as much as he may desire, secondly, when after test he accepts Him as a true and perfect Guru, he can

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1. Vide Note 2 on page 12. 2 Just as a son may succeed his father as Guru. 3 A Hindu mendicant who goes about from place to place 4 A Muslim divine. 5 Hindi word is यन्त्र 'yantra', which means a mystical diagram supposed to possess occult power 6. A mystical formula or verse by the repetition of which certain results are achieved, e.g illness is removed, snake bite is rendered ineffective etc etc.

derive full benefit from *Satsang* and association with Him and thirdly, he can get advice and help in connection with the difficulties which he meets with in the course of his devotional practices In addition to these three advantages, there is yet another great advantage. Nobody can engage in the contemplation of an invisible God nor does man's mind entertain any fear of invisible God. Thousands of persons daily commit acts which they would be ashamed to commit even in the presence of a child even though they know the Creator to be omnipresent. When a devotee has faith in a living Guru, his mind entertains much fear because he knows that nothing would remain hidden from the Revered Guru so that if he commits any evil action he would have to undergo worry and disgrace of being turned out from the presence of the Guru. Similarly, thousands of persons contemplate God or *Paramatma*[1] and concentrate their attention at the time of contemplation and sometimes imagine that God is as bright as the sun and sometimes that He is as big as the sky or the clouds and the result is that they spend away the whole of their life in such contemplation without achieving real concentration even for a minute nor do they get the Vision of the Supreme Father. The devotee of the True Satguru passes his life in faith, fear and reverence of his Guru on account of which he remains protected against improper and evil actions to a very great extent and the flame of love and faith always remains lighted inside him and when he engages in contemplation according to instructions and his inner eye begins to open up, he is able to get the vision of the Deity of some higher spiritual plane in a short time. He gets encouraged and feels strengthened by visions of this kind and he finds himself able to tread the celestial path so as to reach in the presence of the true Supreme Being and thus one day achieve immortal and everlasting state The subject has been beautifully described at one place in *Bhagwad Gita* also.

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1. Paramātmā i e. Parama (परम) i e Supreme Ātmā (आत्मा) i.e. Spirit. The expression is used for God generally

It is stated therein[1]:—

'O Arjun, the *yajna*[2] of knowledge is superior to the *yajnas* of all kinds because the fruit or result of all the acts performed is knowledge. Thou shouldst receive this knowledge from the Guru by falling at his feet i e. by becoming his humble disciple and by putting questions to him i e. by being a seeker and by serving him. The Guru who has realized the Truth (*Tattvadarśi*[3]) i e. he who has realised *Atma* (the spirit) would teach thee that knowledge. (*Bhagwad Gita* Chapter 4, *Ślokas* 33 and 34).

Hindu brethren generally consider *Bhagvad Gita* as the fifth *Veda* and the holy book mostly read in India next to *Ramayana*[4] is the *Bhagvad Gita*. If people who have faith in this holy book pay attention to the meaning of the above *Ślokas*, they would clearly understand that the *Yajna* of knowledge is superior to all other *Yajnas* in which Hindu brethren have great faith and that it is incumbent on them that they should arrange to perform the *Yajna* of knowledge

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1 The original ślokas are given below

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञ परन्तप ।

सर्वं कर्माखिल पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥ ३३॥

Śreyān dravyamayād yajnāt jñanayajñah Parantapah
Sarvam karmākhilam Pārtha jñāne parisamapyate. 33

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।

उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञान ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिन ॥ ३४ ॥

Tadviddhi pranipāten pariprasnen sevayā,
Upadekshyanti te jñānam jñāninastattvadarśinah 34

2 From Sanskrit verb यज् (yaj) 'to worship', 'to offer' etc 'Yajña' means generally a sacrifice, though in the Vedas it often means 'worship, devotion, prayer' etc. also Ordinarily, in yajñas fire is kindled and oblations are offered to gods 3 'Tattva' (तत्त्व) means truth, reality, essence, true principle 'Tattvadarśī' is one who has perceived the 'truth' or 'reality'. Hence the word is used for Sages who have realized the Ātma and are in communion with God In Vedānta, 'Tattva' is taken to be made up of 'tad' (तद्) and 'tvam' (त्वम्), 'that' (art) 'thou'. One who has realized the truth of this principle is also a 'Tattvadarśī' 4 'Rāmāyana' in Hindi by Tulsidas who lived from 1532 to 1623 A D.

instead of kindling fire and making oblations of ghee and other materials in it and as advised by Lord Krishna, they should obtain this knowledge by falling at the feet of some *Tattvadarśi* Guru i.e. the Guru who has realized the truth and by his service. It is quite evident that only that person who has come into contact with a living and *Tattvadarśi* Guru can act on these instructions of Lord Krishna.

A little unbiased consideration would show that the teachings of the Religion of Saints and Lord Krishna in regard to the devotion (*Bhakti*) of the Guru are absolutely identical. Hence, if stress is laid in the Religion of Saints on the search of the Perfect Guru and people are weaned away from the worship of gods and goddesses and from *Yajnas* and worship of the *Vedas* and *Śastras*[1], this teaching is not intended to lead away Hindu brethren from the Hindu religion but to take them back to the path which was disclosed by their own Sages and from which they have since strayed far away

On reading the above, some people who are not well-acquainted with the teachings of the Radhasoami Faith can say that they agree that search for a living and true Guru should be made but even the followers of the Radhasoami Faith themselves do not search for the True Guru The Great Personalities who are believed in the Radhasoami Faith to have been True Gurus had not read the *Vedas* and the *Śastras* and had no mastery over Sanskrit and as such they could not be considered entitled to the status of Guru, even though their conduct and bearing was no doubt very good.

It is clear that the objection of the critic that without reading the *Vedas* and the *Śastras* and gaining a mastery over Sanskrit language nobody can be entitled to the status

1. The word 'Śāstras' is generally used for ancient religious books of the Hindus, though in a more technical sense it refers to the six Darśanas of Indian Philosophy

of a Guru is wholly meaningless This objection is raised mostly by those persons who have not themsleves read the *Vedas* and *Śastras* but entertain strange ideas about the ancient holy books If these people themselves take some pains and study the *Vedas* and the *Śastras*, their objection would automatically disappear. Instructions regarding the need and for searching a true Guru have been given at various places in the *Upanishads*[1]. For instance the following appears at one place in the *Katha*[2] *Upanishad*:—

"Get up and awake and obtain instructions from selected Gurus. The Learned i.e. the *Rishis* say that the spiritual path is as sharp as the edge of a razor and it is very difficult and hazardous to walk on it[3]."

Besides, detailed instructions are given in the *Manu Smriti*, Chapter II, about the importance of the Guru and his service. It is stated—

"The disciple who serves the Guru till his own death, attains to the eternal abode of *Brahma* i.e. after his death he merges in *Brahma*" (*Śloka* 244).

"The services, viz, massaging the body, bathing, eating the leavings of the food and washing the feet should

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1. 'Upanishads', which are 108 in number, form part of the Vedic literature. 2 'Katha' is the name of a famous Ṛishi of the Vedic days There is a 'Śākhā' (for which see Note 1 on page 137) of Yajur-Veda belonging to the school of the 'Kathas' i e. of the followers of 'Katha' Ṛishi. 3 The original Sanskrit text is —

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान् निबोधत ।
क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया दुर्गम् पथस्तत् कवयो वदन्ति ॥'

'Uttishthata jāgrata prāpya varān nibōdhata
Kshurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā durgam pathastat Kavayō vadanti '
(I-3-14)

not be rendered to the son of the Guru but to the Guru alone."[1] (*Śloka* 209).

Besides this in *Bhagwad Gita*, Chapter 2 it is stated :—

"The subject matter of the *Vedas* is confined to the three *Gunas*, that is, the teaching of the *Vedas* pertains to the region within the limits of the three *Gunas*, viz, *Sat*, *Raj*, *Tam*. Oh Arjun, you go beyond the limit of the three *Gunas* and go beyond the region of *dvandvas*[2] and achieve for yourself the everlasting state, be indifferent to what you have or what you should have and know the *Atma*."[3] (*Śloka* 45).

"All the *Vedas* are useful to a learned *Brahma*-realized Holy Person to the same extent as a small pit is in a place flooded with and full of water, i.e. just as a small pit stands no comparison as against the sea, similarly the knowledge contained in all the *Vedas* is of no value to a person who has realized *Brahma*"[4] (*Śloka* 46).

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1 The original Sanskrit text is —

आसमाप्ते॰ शरीरस्य यस्तु शुश्रूषते गुरुम् ।
स गच्छत्यञ्जसा विप्रो ब्रह्मण सद्म शाश्वतम् ॥ २-२४४ ॥

Āsamāpteh śarīrasya yastu śuśrūshate Gurum,
Sa gachchhatyañjasā viprō Brahmanah sadma śāśvatam (II-244)

उत्सादन च गात्राणा स्नापनोच्छिष्टभोजने ।
न कुर्याद्गुरुपुत्रस्य पादयोश्चावने जनम् ॥ २-२०९ ॥

Utsādanam cha gātrānām snapanōchchhishtabhōjane,
Na kuryādguruputrasya pādayōśchāvane janam. (II-209)

2. Pairs of opposite qualities or conditions e g heat and cold, joy and sorrow etc. etc 3. The original Sanskrit text is —

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्य सत्वस्थोनिर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥ २-४५ ॥

Traigunyavishayā vedā nistraigunyō bhavārjuna,
Nirdvandvō nitya satvasthō niryogakshema ātmavān (II-45)

4 The original Sanskrit text is —

यावानर्थं उदपाने सर्वत सम्प्लुतोदके ।
तावान्सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानत ॥ २-४६ ॥

Yāvānartha udapāne sarvatah samplutōdake,
Tāvānsarveshu Vedeshu Brāhmanasya vijānatah (II-46)

Besides this, it is stated in Chapter 11 :—

"O, Arjun, thou hast got the vision of my Form through my mercy etc."[1] (*Śloka* 47).

"O Arjun, Supreme among *Kauravas*, none in this world (in which all men live) can see this Form of mine through the study of the *Vedas*, through *Yajnas*, through studies, through charity, through good acts or through hard penance excepting thyself."[2] (*Śloka* 48).

If all the above authoritative statements are taken into consideration, one can easily imagine how little force there is in the statement of the critics that nobody is entitled to the status of a Guru unless he has studied the *Vedas* and the *Śastras* etc. and one can also see what position do the *Vedas* occupy in comparison to a *Brahma*-realized Person i.e. a true Guru. He can also see for himself how far our mistaken brethren whose heart is full of love for the *Vedas* and *Śastras* etc. and the Sanskrit language and who spend their time in reading books and singing the praises of ancient books instead of searching for a true Guru are in the right and on the side of truth ?

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1 The original Sanskrit text is —

मयाप्रसन्नेन तवार्जुनेद रूप पर दर्शितमात्मयोगात्।
तेजोमय विश्वमनन्तमाद्य यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम् ॥ ११-४७ ॥

Mayā prasannena tavārjunedam rūpam param darśitamātmayōgāt,
Tejōmayam viśvamanantamādyam yanme tvadanyen na drishtapūrvam.
(XI 47)

2. The original Sanskrit text is —

न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैर्न दानैर्न च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिरुग्रै ।
एवरूपः शक्य अह नृलोके द्रष्टु त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर ॥ ११-४८ ॥

Na vedayajñādhyayanair na dānair na cha kriyābhir na tapōbhirugraih,
Evamrūpah śakya aham nṛlōkẹ drashṭum tvadanyena Kurupravīra. (XI-48)

DISCOURSE 54

SUPERIORITY OF THE TEACHINGS OF THE RADHASOAMI SATSANG

In the 'Popular Pictorial', an English newspaper, a writer who is very well-versed in social subjects has written a very heart-rending article about unemployed persons in England. It is learnt from Government Census figures that there are at present (in 1928) in England more than 12 lacs of unemployed persons, each of whom has to support on an average three members of his family On this calculation, about 50 lacs of idle and unemployed persons are somehow passing their days. The Government has made sufficient arrangement to help these distressed people but it is impossible for any Government to keep this class of people happy and contented. These unfortunate people somehow pass their days and according to the saying 'What sin is there which a hungry man may not commit' turn to different vices. The writer has further stated that besides these idle and unemployed people, there are another 50 lacs of persons who are in employment but whose income is quite inadequate for their maintenance and the maintenance of their dependants. Such is the glory of the Supreme Being that there are in England on the one hand sky-high palaces and magnificient mansions for music and dance parties and an abundance of articles of enjoyment and pleasure and on the other hand, one crore of persons are passing their days with empty stomachs. It is said that the cause of wretchedness and poverty in India is its internal dissensions but it is not understood why this calamity (i.e. unemployment etc.) should have befallen these one crore of persons in England. The British nation, who are said to be well-organised and closely united like the particles of a piece of sugar candy and the flag of whose Empire flies over every country of the world, is not able to save one crore of its population from poverty and unemployment. In

our opinion, the cause of this great calamity is that the hearts of Englishmen are filled with love of the world and they are slaves to their minds European masses have made the enjoyment of worldly pleasures and the accumulation of fascinating articles as the ideal of their lives and all men and women without exception are madly running after worldly things. These one crore of unemployed men and women are those who have been left behind in the race. In the opinion of the writer of the article, this black mark can be removed from the forehead of the English people only by acquiring foreign markets for the export of English manufactures i.e the sale of goods manufactured in England should be pushed forward energetically in foreign countries. Besides this, he is of the opinion that every man and woman should be compelled to do some work and no maintenance allowance should be paid to any healthy man or woman who may be sitting idle. Persons who cannot work in workshops or offices, i e. those who are unfit to do high class work should be compelled to learn and undertake domestic service in families and as far as possible silly ideas should be eradicated from the minds of those people who think themselves educated and well-bred and refuse to do this kind of work Those who are really well-bred feel no shame at all in doing any work to earn an honest living. Hundreds of people born of rich parents are gladly serving as engine drivers in the railway department to earn their living and they are happy that they are not putting any burden on their country, nation or relations for their maintenance or the maintenance of their families. How far is it then justified and proper for persons of ordinary status to consider domestic service as derogatory to their self respect and thus to remain idle and be a burden on the tax-payers ?

The leaders of England for the good of their brothers and sisters are formulating schemes in order that the trade of England may be improved by controlling foreign markets and serious efforts are being made continuously in this

connection in all countries under British rule and influence but in India nobody ever dreams of helping the distressed people of this country Every year, thousands of youngmen pass examinations in every province and thousands of them obtain their degrees in the country but hardly two to four hundred lucky persons obtain Government service and the rest pass their days only in sending applications for service. The rich are getting poorer day by day, the zamindars are becoming tenants and the tenants, labourers. The people neither get full meals nor can they have any restful sleep. They are always worried about feeding themselves and their relations and about educating their children. Everybody from whom you enquire says that he is under heavy debt and everybody you see has a pale face and is a victim of many diseases. Whosoever has even superficially considered the economic condition of the Indians would at once say that at the present moment India is caught in the midst of a whirlpool. If the Almighty Creator, Who is the Father of all the *Jivas*, directs His special attention to India at the present time, then alone can it be saved. The Sages of ancient India put before the Indians the ideal of renunciation but the masses did not understand the real significance of their teachings and adopted as their ideal a life of sloth and indolence and of dependence on others for their maintenance and the westerners, on the other hand, as described above, adopted as the ideal of their life emigration to other countries of the world and holding fast to them and thus they have created conditions of great hardship for their own weak and unfit-for-strife brothers and sisters and also for the ease-loving Indians. The teachings of the Satsang are that every *Satsangi* brother and sister should maintain himself or herself by his or her own honestly earned income and no brother or sister should be a burden to others or the Satsang and that the *darśana* of Merciful Radhasoami should be the real aim of their life. A little thought would enable us easily to understand that by acting on these two principles not only

can we achieve excellent results for the Satsang Community but we can also set such an example for the inhabitants of India and other countries that they can also relieve themselves of unemployment and poverty by acting on these principles. Moreover, it would also appear how close is the similarity between the teachings of the Radhasoami Satsang and the ideas of the writer of that English newspaper.

DISCOURSE 55

THIS IS THE TIME FOR DEVOTEES FOR DOING PRACTICE

When the earth gets moist after rainfall in the rainy season, all cultivators cheerfully take out their ploughs and pairs of bullocks to the fields and put in arduous labour from morning to evening, whether it be raining heavily or there may be scorching sun. On account of the hot sun and vapours of the month of *Bhadon*[1], eighty per cent of the cultivators suffer from malaria every year and remain lying on their cots or the ground for considerable time but on the approach of the next sowing season, they again gird up their loins and get ready for hard work If anybody sees them working in the hot sun or during rain, he sympathises with them and suggests that they may leave work and sit in the shade and save themselves from the effects of the sun and rain, but every cultivator would most certainly reply that it was time for him to work He would say that the work done in these months would provide him comfort during the whole of the year and if he leads an easy life at the time, it would mean trouble to him during the whole year. Cultivators give that reply because they know that good crops are obtained by ploughing and sowing at particular times only

1 Hindi name of a month. It generally corresponds to the month of August of the Gregorian Calendar

and if cultivation is done at times other than those, it would yield nothing excepting grass and weeds. Let the seekers of true *paramartha* take lesson from the foresight of the cultivators. Everybody knows that the condition of the human mind does not always remain the same. Deterioration in health and undesirable changes in conditions of one's life upset a man's mind and when conditions become favourable beyond expectation and comprehension and sufficient quantity of pure blood circulates in the body, the mind begins to rush towards the world with unusual force and speed. The lovers of *paramartha* understand quite well that the extraordinary conditions of grief and excitement are unsuitable for spiritual practices. Proper performance of spiritual practices is possible only when the mind is steady to a certain extent and the mind remains steady only when a man has normal health and freedom from worries of life and faith and love for the true Supreme Being dominate his mind. Hence the time, when sentiments of love and faith fill the heart of a true *paramarthi* and because of this, his mind is steady to some extent, is suitable for performing spiritual practices and if the devotee acts with a little care and prudence and performs spiritual practices during that time, he can complete in a few years or in a few days the spiritual journey which normally would require many lives or many years respectively to complete. But it is generally observed to the contrary that the *paramarthi*, on finding himself in such good condition, often argues that there is no need to perform spiritual practices as no evil tendencies appear in his mind nor is there any desire for worldly objects also and sentiments of love and devotion more or less fill his heart. He thinks there is no need to sit in a corner and perform the practices and as the Supreme Being in His extreme mercy had granted him all those things for his comfort and convenience, it would be meaningless for him to leave those things aside and put his body and mind to strain. The result is that after some time, when health deteriorates and surrounding conditions also change, the sentiments of love and devotion disappear

and bodily and worldly desires make him feel troubled, he finds himself in a helpless condition and can do nothing but rub his hands in repentance.

DISCOURSE 56

GREAT RESPONSIBILITY OF SATSANGI BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Satsangi brothers generally feel happy to think that they have through Grace easily understood the teachings of the Satsang and they have agreed to accept the protection of Merciful Radhasoami A good many brothers thank their stars that without any special efforts or undergoing the hardships of ancient times they have been blessed with such a great boon. It is in no way wrong for Satsangi brothers to entertain such thoughts in their minds and feel happy and satisfied about it but there are only a few Satsangi brothers who realize that the grant of this mercy and grace has simultaneously brought on them a big and heavy responsibility. It is an occasion for serious thought that if in reality Merciful Radhasoami is not a mere human being nor any personality with limited powers but is the Prime Reservoir of the Supreme Spiritual Force and is the Prime Cause and the true Parent of the whole creation and all the *Jivas* (both human beings and animals) who live on the earth are the children of the same Merciful Supreme Being and that the All-Merciful has brought the Radhasoami Faith into limelight on this earth for the ultimate good of the *Jivas*, then it would have to be admitted that one day the most holy message of Merciful Radhasoami would reach the ears of all mankind, i.e. things would be so arranged on behalf of that Merciful Lord that men of every country and nation, whether low or high, may derive benefit from the teachings of the Religion of Saints but it is evident that it is not an easy

task to attract the attention of the entire world towards the high teachings of the Religion of Saints and to make people accept its high ideals Different nations have different ideals before them and they are biased in their hearts in favour of different ideas and those ideas are such as have come down generation after generation among these nations and they have received from them a good deal of satisfaction and help in removing their religious and worldly troubles. Under these circumstances, how can they agree to change their ideas and ideals ? Hence it would not be wrong to conclude that there lies a big and heavy responsibility on those brothers who have been blessed with the protection of Merciful Radhasoami and who have sincerely accepted the teachings of the Religion of Saints. They should show by their practical life that by accepting the ideals and teachings of the Religion of Saints and by acting upon them there has been a very good and visible change in their lives. In other words, our conduct and bearing, our organization and our institutions should be such that the defects and weaknesses which are a source of great worry generally to other nations and communities may not be found in our case. Our community should provide for its financial, educational, organizational and spiritual needs so gracefully and well that other people and communities should find us better on comparing our mode of life with theirs and on finding us better, they may feel interested in and desirous of ascertaining the secret of our success and when they come to us to enquire about our mode of life and our institutions etc. we should instinctively treat them so well that they may feel that we have a soft corner for them in our hearts and geographical barriers have not separated them from us. They should also feel that as a result of the teachings of the Religion of Saints we have become entirely different kind of men and that not only do we ourselves lead a noble life but we are also anxious to make others happy and our doors are always open for seekers after truth belonging to every community and religion. On seeing such things generally within the Satsang community

the effect on the hearts of the seekers would naturally be that they would think that there must surely be some extraordinary power working within the Satsang community and when they come to know that that power is the Merciful '*Nij Dhar*'[1] of Merciful Radhasoami, they of their own accord would feel interested to know something about Merciful Radhasoami and His Merciful *Nij Dhar* and for this they would perforce have to make an intensive study of the teachings of the Religion of Saints and when a change takes place in their ideas they would, without any pressure from any side or any worldly temptation, be ready to establish brotherly relations with us.

It is quite easy to speak about and listen to such things but it is not so easy to act upon them The desired change in our mode of life can come only when we have developed to some extent feelings of sincere detachment from the world and true love for Merciful Radhasoami. If the heart of any Satsangi brother is void of such detachment and such love, his conduct and bearing cannot in any way be better than that of ordinary worldly people. How should then one develop detachment and love ? This is possible only through special *samskaras*[2]. How is one to acquire these special *samskaras* ? The only method for achieving this is to attend the Satsang carefully and with attention. It is true that considerable change takes place in the understanding of a man by reading the books written by Adepts, Sages and devotees and also by suffering the ups and downs of life. Similarly, the ideas of men also change by the study of historical books, by observing world conditions and on the commencement of middle age after the period of youth is over but the extent of detachment from the world and the kind of love required for making a man lead the life of a devoted *paramarthi* cannot be acquired in any of these ways It has been mentioned in

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1 Vide Note 3 on page 59. 2. Vide Note 2 on page 20.

"*Yoga Darśana*"[1] that on obtaining the realization of *Atma,* the state of *Para Vairagya*[2] i.e. the state of greatest indifference for the world is achieved. The *samskaras* which develop on sitting at the feet of the Sages, who have achieved *Para Vairagya* (i.e. greatest indifference) after the realization of the *Atma*, by listening to their holy discourses, by imbibing the influence of their mode of life and by receiving their merciful glances and aid are of an entirely different character. It is thus the duty of Satsangi brothers to take full advantage of the opportunity to associate with Him when Merciful Radhasoami through His Grace grants them such opportunity i e. when Merciful Radhasoami grants them an opportunity and facility to join the Satsang with full attention and in such a manner that they can obtain full benefit of the Satsang and they should acquire in full measure those special "*samskaras*" whose importance has been described above and after imbibing the beneficial effect of the Satsang for some time in this way they should examine their condition and see if any pleasant change has come about in their conduct and bearing. If Merciful Radhasoami continues to grant to us *Jivas* the auspicious opportunities of nearness to His Holy Feet and Satsangi brothers and sisters go on acting as aforesaid and changes go on taking place within us, then alone the establishment of the Satsang on this earth and our taking the protection of Merciful Radhasoami can be fruitful and then alone can the attention of the masses be attracted towards the teachings and ideals of the Radhasoami Satsang and only then that heavy responsibility which devolves on us on account of our having taken the protection of Merciful Radhasoami long before others, can be discharged fully and in accordance with the Will of Merciful Radhasoami.

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1. 'Yōga Darśana' is the treatise on Yōga by Sage Patanjali It is also known as the 'Yōga Sūtras'. The 'Yōga Darśana' explains one of the six systems of Indian Philosophy 2 The expression 'Para Vairāgya' refers to the state of supreme 'Vairāgya' or indifference towards everything worldly.

DISCOURSE 57

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE ILLUSIVE ATTRACTIONS OF FORM AND COLOUR IN THE WORLD

It is man's habit that he at first tests a new thing when he gets it and on finding it useful, he uses it again and again and after some time he makes new inventions in respect of the same and discovers its new uses. For example, man in the beginning obtained milk from cows and then gradually began to convert milk into curd, to extract butter from it, to prepare cheese and sweets and ghee from it. When different kinds of uses of any commodity are discovered, naturally the demand for that commodity increases considerably in the world and when the demand is large and the supply is short, its price goes up very high When this happens, man either begins to adulterate it in various ways to reduce its price or prepares cheap imitations of it and thus makes his profit. The result is that after some time adulterated and spurious articles begin to be used on a large scale and instead of the benefits derivable from the real article many harmful effects appear and thousands and millions of people are thus deceived and instead of deriving any benefit, suffer considerable harm. It should be remembered that in the matter of *paramartha* also man has made similar adulterations and reduced true *paramartha* to dust. The result is that millions of people, having faith in *paramartha* and struggling hard for its achievement, are not only deprived of the real benefit of *paramartha* but are extremely miserable in heart and worried in mind and the fun of it is that on account of these mistakes and weaknesses even men of high ability and intelligence are doing serious harm to themselves and to those who have faith in them. Thus some people are heard these days preaching that there is neither any heaven nor any paradise and that true happiness can be

acquired on this very earth, provided that man goes about in this world with his eyes open, leaves aside his old ideas about search of *Sadhs* and Saints and about *Sadhana*[1] and devotional practices etc. etc. and makes a search for the Beloved Lord and the Deity in the objects of the world They say that those who have got eyes go into ecstacies on seeing the brilliance of the sun and the colours of the flowers and on hearing the chirping of the birds and the thunder of the clouds. The bliss and the nearness to the Beloved which they experience in that condition is known only to them. Thus the Great Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore says at one place[2] :—

'Leave the chanting and singing and telling of beads ! Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut ? Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee !"

In the same way, the famous English poet, Wordsworth says[3] :—

"One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can."

Does a man really get the Vision of the Lord by seeing the scenery of the world and is he able to meet his true Beloved ? Men must have often seen the scenery of a jungle in the spring season and also must have looked outside the temple, i.e. in the open plains with eyes wide open but can anybody say that his intense desire for the Vision of the Lord was fulfilled in that way and that he believed and felt quite satisfied that he had met the true Beloved Lord ? Are not

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1 The word 'Sādhana' (साधन) in very commonly used for devotional or Yōga practices 2 'Gitānjali'—No XI'. 3 In his poem 'Up ! up ! my Friend, and quit your books ;'

the colours of flowers and leaves in the spring time the result of sun's rays falling on them and of the existence of some particular substances in leaves and flowers ? Are not all the objects of the world, both the beautiful and the ugly, the result of combination of the five elements ? Is that *Paramatma*[1], Who has been extolled by *Rishis*[2] and *Munis*[3] or that *Khuda*[4] whose refulgence and glory have been praised by the Prophets and *Aulias*[5] or that *Satya Purusha*[6] who has been praised in the sweet *Bani*[7] of Saints only what we perceive in the shape of colours of flowers and leaves with the help of sun's rays or in the chirping of birds or the thunder of clouds ? As leaves and flowers of some trees appear to be beautiful in the spring time and the faces and bodies of some persons also appear to be lovely in their young age, we enquire whether it would be true if a person on seeing the face or body of a handsome youngman said that he had seen his spirit or *Atma* ? And if by seeing the face of a handsome young man, we cannot even know his mind, leave aside his spirit, it should be all the more difficult, nay impossible, to obtain the knowledge of the Lord by seeing flowers and leaves, mountains and rivers. Many stories of worldly love are well-known in the world which show that silly youngmen, caught in the meshes of physical beauty get ruined both from religious and worldly points of view. The state of hallucination which possesses a man's mind on seeing the beauty of flowers and fruits in spring time or on being charmed by monntains, rivers and other natural scenery is also similar to worldly love and the men who pass their lives in this state of hallucination are grossly mistaken The vision of the *Atma* or *Paramatma* was never obtained nor could it ever be

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1 Vide Note 6 on page 11 2. Vide Note 3 on page 109. 3. Vide Note 4 on page 109. 4. Vide Note 2 on page 103 5 The word 'Auliā' is plural of the Persian word 'Valī', though it is often used as a singular noun also Valī means one who has attained nearness to God 6 The expression is used generally for the Deity of Satya Loka but it is used for the Supreme Being also in many places 7 Vide Note 1 on page 104.

obtained as long as the *Divya Chakshu*[1] i.e. the spiritual eye of a man is not opened. Suitable spiritual practices are necessary for opening this spiritual eye. Our physical senses also remain quite useless without proper practice. Those who hesitate to perform the practices required for the awakening of the spiritual eye and please themselves by seeing natural scenery and explain to the masses that it gives the vision of the true Creator and that it constitutes real bliss, are clearly doing harm to themselves and to the people who put faith in what they say. Every zealous *paramarthi* would have to sit alone for some time in some quiet corner and perform suitable practices to awaken his spiritual eye and he would also have to search for a Perfect Master to learn the methods of spiritual practices. Without adopting this method no *Paramarthi* has ever succeeded in having his hope fulfilled, nor shall it ever be fulfilled in future.

DISCOURSE 58

TRUE BRAVERY AND REAL FORBEARANCE

Many people think that bravery consists in facing dangers and taking risks without any thought but this is not correct. It is a moral weakness in a man who has no ability or capacity for any work to undertake it simply on seeing others undertake it or on being advised to do so and is injurious both to his worldly and spiritual interests alike. But very often, not only ordinary people but big communities and nations come to serious harm on account of this weakness. Devotees should act with restraint on such occasions. If

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1. 'Divya Chakshu' literally means 'Divine Eye'. It refers to the 6th Chakra, the seat of the spirit in the human body. This eye is the apparatus through which man can form connection with higher regions. For '6th Chakra', see Note 1 on page 131.

Satsangi brothers desire that arrangements of the Satsang be made on a large scale and lacs and millions of people should get an opportunity to benefit themselves from the protection and teachings of Merciful Radhasoami, it is not proper for us, like other people and communities, to take upon ourselves all at once big responsibilities but what is required is that *Satsangi* brothers should develop sufficient capacity to render this great service, i e. they should develop in themselves physical, mental and spiritual strength. Without knowing the *mantras* even for a scorpion bite, it is foolish to put one's hand in a snake's hole. There is no harm if we have to wait patiently for some time to develop this strength Accomplishment of big tasks requires preparation for years and years. It is proper for us that we should without any undue haste gradually discard all our weaknesses and undesirable habits and customs and acting upon the instructions so far received or that may be received in future for our physical, mental and spiritual progress and taking advantage of all the existing and future arrangements we should continue our progress. We should always remember that it is only a brave man who makes efforts to remove his weaknesses when he comes to know of them. The second desirable thing for us is that we should contain ourselves when once we have developed our strength and capacity. The saying is well-known that it is easy to acquire the strength of an elephant but it is not so easy to use it with due care and caution as the elephant does. We should be careful to see that when we have acquired the strength of a lion and the mental capacity like that of Socrates, we do not harass our weak and less capable brethren. Only those people who are extraordinarily brave can control themselves when their physical, mental and spiritual strength has been sufficiently well developed. Thirdly, when suitable opportunity comes our way, it is proper for us to use our abilities to their fullest extent

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1 Formulae which are repeated to bring about certain desirable results.

and if need be, we should sacrifice our body, mind and wealth ungrudgingly. It should be clear that ideal bravery consists in first acquiring necessary competence and ability and then acting with restraint and patience until a suitable opporunity offers itself and then to make fullest use of it. In this connection it appears necessary to mention here one thing more.

It is generally said that it is highly praiseworthy for man to act with forbearance and in common parlance both lifeless things and living beings are said to be good or bad according as they have the power of endurance. For example, the foundation of a house is said to be good if it bears the weight of the walls with safety and the walls are said to be good and strong if they easily bear the weight of the roof and the roof is praised when it withstands the effects of rain, heat and cold satisfactorily and stays on. Similarly, only that bullock or horse is said to be good which can easily put up with hard work night and day and only those *Sadhus*[1] and *Faḳirs* are considered to be good who remain naked and hungry and bear heat, cold, hunger and thirst to an unlimited extent. But it should be clearly noted that the principles applicable to the lifeless objects and animals are not wholly applicable to men and true *Sadhs*[2] and *Mahatmas*[3] do not resort to *tapasya*[4] or rigorous discipline simply to acquire physical and mental powers of endurance. They only bring their mind and senses under control through *tapasya* so that their mind and senses, compelled by old habits or physical and mental weaknesses, may not put obstacles in the awakening of the spiritual faculties and in the ascent of the spirit to higher regions. We

1. Mendicants. 2 Vide Note 2 on page 128 3. Vide Note 4 on page 128. 4 'Tapasyā' (तपस्या) conveys the same idea as तपस् (tapas) i e. religious austerities 'Tapas' means heat. When a devotee exposed himself to five fires (four, which he lighted on all four sides of himself and one of the sun from above), he was said to be doing तपस् (tapas) Hence तपस् (tapas) or तपस्या (tapasyā) came to mean mortification of the body.

do not mean to suggest by this statement that the power of forbearance is unnecessary or useless for any community or nation, but the meaning is that mere development of the power of endurance or acting with restraint and patience on every conceivable occasion may prove to be inadequate or even harmful. If an enemy attacks you, you may gladly suffer quietly but if he attacks your children or relations or insults your elders or leaders, it would be quite absurd and improper for you at that time to act with forbearance. No doubt, if you are weak and incapable, it would be advisable for you to remain quiet at that time but if you have sufficient strength and ability, it would be entirely wrong and improper for you to remain quiet and go on praising the quality of forbearance. A true disciple and a brave devotee develops within himself proper physical, mental and spiritual strength and if the occasion so demands acts with forbearance but does not in all cases merely stop at praising the virtue of endurance. Whenever a crisis comes up, he asks himself what action he should take at that time. If this question does not arise in the heart of a person in moments of crisis, he is either a coward or a dead man. He is not fit to be called a man. Whenever a difficult situation arises or trouble starts, the heart of the brave devotee responds immediately and his brain suggests proper ways and means and after due thought and care, the devotee takes suitable action in the matter. Of course, there are many brave people in the world whose minds and hearts act spontaneously and promptly on such occasions but very often people act in a narrow-minded and weak manner because everybody does not have high ideals before him. The attention of the people in general is absorbed entirely in worldly progress and in worldly enjoyment during their present life and the achievement of these alone is the ideal of their life. It is however expected from a devotee that he would act with magnanimity and noble courage. The suggestions which his heart and brain put forward should be in conformity with the high dignity of the devotees of the Saints. In other

words, a devotee should have three qualities, viz,

(1) he should have power of endurance,

(2) he should have such heart and brain as may enable him to make proper decisions whenever occasion requires, and

(3) he should keep in mind the high *paramarthi*[1] ideals while considering action to be taken.

With these three qualities within us, if we would use our physical, mental and spiritual strength, our efforts and acts would yield agreeable results, otherwise the result would be nothing but an increase in the troubles of the world.

One can enquire what that *paramarthi* ideal is that has been referred to above? That ideal is that by our word, thought and deed, we should do nothing which might displease the Supreme Being Merciful Radhasoami or the Revered Guru, i e the proposals which we think out or act upon, should be such as may gain for us the pleasure of Merciful Radhasoami and the Revered Guru.

DISCOURSE 59

WORDS UTTERED ON THE DEATH-BED

We give below the words of a few famous men of the world which they uttered at the time of their departure from the world. From a perusal of these utterances, it appears that the effect of the actions, which a man performs all through his life, and of the desires and feelings which dominate his heart, manifests itself with great force in his last moments.

Sir Henry Havelock[2] who became so famous in the War

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1 i e. the ideals of 'paramārtha'. 2. Sir Henry Havelock (1795-1857) was a British General serving in India in 1857.

of Indian Independence in 1857 was surrounded at Lucknow when he came there after forcing the siege of Kanpur. He remained besieged for six weeks and died a few days after the siege was lifted At the time of his death he said "I am dying in happiness and with satisfaction. See how a Christian dies " After this he turned towards General Outram[1] and said "For forty years I had disciplined my life so that I may face death at the time of my departure without any fear, but I fail to understand why my mind has been in a feverish condition for the past few days and why there is uneasiness both in my mind and body Whether asleep or awake, I see every moment the blood-stained and highly loathsome corpses of the slaughtered people. I wish I had not killed the innocent and the weak." Contrary to it, a lady named Margaret Fell[2], who was the wife of a famous and renowned Christian Quaker, George Fox[3] said at the time of her death, "I am in peace". There is a sect of Quakers among Christians whose members are extremely truthful and honest and they avoid swearing to such an extent that many of their leaders were punished for refusing to take the oath in courts. At last, the British Government exempted the members of the sect by law from taking oath.

In the same way, Sir Richard Grenville[4] who in 1591 opposed the entire fleet of Spain with his single ship for fourteen hours said loudly at the time of his death, "I, Richard Grenville, depart from the world in great joy and peace because I have spent my life fighting like a true soldier for my

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1 Another British General serving in India in 1857. 2 She was the wife of Judge Fell. After she became a widow, she married in 1669 George Fox, the Founder of Quaker movement She died in 1702. 3. Founder of the Society of Friends (or 'Quakers' as they are popularly known). He was born in 1624 and died in 1691. He founded the Society of Friends in 1647 4. Sir Richard Grenville (1541-91) commanded the ship 'Revenge' as second to Lord Howard. Lord Howard ordered his ships to move away as the Spanish fleet was too strong Sir Richard perhaps misunderstood the order and so was left alone to fight.

country, my Queen, my religion and my honour and my spirit gladly departs from my body and I leave behind my name for ever that I discharged my duties like a Hero." Satsangi brothers should compare the words of Sir Henry Havelock with those of Margaret Fell and Sir Richard Grenville and draw the conclusion for themselves.

Mahātmā Buddha said before leaving his body—"Dear brothers, listen to my this advice with attention—All the material objects of the world are by their nature perishable, but truth never dies.' Mr. Taylor, who was a friend of Mr. John Wolcot[1], a well-known poet, enquired from him at the time of the latter's death. "O friend ! can I be of any service to you at this time ?" Wolcot replied, "Get me back my youth," Evidently, as the attention of *Mahatma* Buddha remained focussed on truth for the whole of his life and the world always appeared to him transient, so he gave his advice on the same subject in his last moments also. On the other hand, John Wolcot was a lover of youth and so words relating to his desire to become young again came to his lips at the time of his death.

Cardinal Mazarin[2] said at the time of his death, "Alas ! my friends, I have to leave all these things. May God bless you ! O my paintings ! How much did I love you and how much money did I spend to acquire you !" Similarly Mahmud Ghaznavi also uttered similar words, "Alas ! Alas ! how many dangers, how many physical and mental troubles I had to undergo for the acquisition of these treasures and for ensuring their safety but now I have to leave all this treasure here." "Siraj-ud-Daula[3], when he was about to die, said to his executioners "*Hussain Kuli*, I had murdered you and to

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1. John Wolcot (1738-1819) was a poet and satirist of England.
2. Cardinal Mazarin (1602-1661) was the Chief Minister of France who succeeded Cardinal Richelieu. 3. Nawab of Bengal (1756-1757). He attacked the English Settlement at Calcutta. In 1757 he was defeated by the British at Plassey Subsequently he was beheaded.

alone for it, my execution was necessary. Wait! Wait! *Hussain Kuli*, thou shalt be avenged soon now." Siraj-ud-Daulah had got *Hussain Kuli* murdered at some time and when he himself was going to be executed, he was reminded of his sin and all these words came to his lips Words quite different from these were uttered by Miss Margaret Noble whom Swāmi Vivekānand[1] had named as Sister *Nivedita*[2], who said at the time of her death, "My boat is sinking but the sun would surely rise and grant me his Vision."

DISCOURSE 60

HOW HAS RELIGION BEEN VILIFIED ?

It appears from a study of the ancient books of India that there came a period in this country when *Rishis* of high status made their advent here. These *Riśhis* taught the worship of '*Nirgun Brahma*'[3] in place of the worship of ancestors and gods. This was a period of great advance in India both from the worldly and spiritual points of view. It is very correctly stated in the *Śastras*[4] that every person is not intellectually fit for the worship of '*Nirgun Brahma*'. The ancients, in order to help people, introduced the worship of '*Sagun Brahma*'[5] and in order to facilitate concentration of attention, idols of stone or metal were made. Thus for some time people contemplated God *Vishnu*[6] internally after they

1 Swami Vivekananda (1863-1901) was a disciple of Shri Rama Krishna He went to America and explained Hinduism there in his lectures. 2. Sister Niveditā was a disciple of Swami Vivekananda . 3 'Nirgun Brahma' is Brahma beyond the range of the three gunas. The expression thus refers to 'Para-Brahma'. 4. Vide Note 1 on page 198 5 'Sagun Brahma' refers to 'Brahma' within the range of the three gunas. 6 The three deities entrusted with the work of the creation in the Pind Deśa are Brahmā, Vishnu and Śiva. 'Vishnu' and 'Śiva' have been generally worshipped and many incarnations are believed to be those of Vishnu.

had looked at the idols and by this method they achieved considerable purity and spiritual powers and the needs of men with average intellect were sufficiently well served by this method. However, this worship of *Sagun Brahma* gradually deteriorated into idol worship and selfish or foolish devout people made different kinds of idols of gods and thus began to harm themselves and also innocent devotees When the number of idols became innumerable and separate temples were built in every city and town, nay even in every street and lane, naturally the means of livelihood of these selfish people began to suffer and as such competition started among them. Hence everybody tried by practising fraud and deception of different and new kinds to enhance the reputation of his temple so as to attract the largest number of people for worship there. Some sensual people arranged for music and dances of prostitutes and some others arranged to distribute sweets and eatables of good quality and some cunning persons gave currency to various miracles and wonders In this category, the truth about the *Somnath*[1] temple is worth mentioning. This temple had the reputation that each and every incurable disease of man could be cured by having the *darśana* of the idol there with true devotion and faith. The idol of *Śiva* was installed in this temple and it was given out that this was the idol of the Deity of the moon and it was because of this that it was named *Som Nath*, i.e. Lord (*Nath*) of the Moon (*Som*)[2]. The priests showed to the masses that the moon visited the temple for worship and offered sea water on full moon nights in worship, though the fact was that this idol was installed at a place on the sea-shore, where tidal water reached on full moon nights and as the public did not know that the sea water rose on account of the flow of the tide and the flow of tide was the highest on full moon day, they were naturally deceived and they believed that the moon itself

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1. It was situated on the sea-coast in Saurashtra in Bombay State.
2. Lord the Moon is 'Śiva'.

offered sea-water to the idol. This much of miracle was quite sufficient for those simple folks and the priests by this single device succeeded in acquiring jewels worth crores of rupees which ultimately fell into the hands of Mahmud Ghaznavi.

Obviously the worship of '*Sagun Brahma*' had not been started to popularize this kind of idol worship or to spread the net of fraud and deception Selfish people defamed both the '*Saguna Brahma*' and his worship to gain their ends and harmed the new innocent devotees who fell victims to their deception both from worldly and spiritual points of view

Then came a period when the system of *Bhakti* of (i e. devotion to) the Satguru came into vogue, i.e. the attention of the people turned towards the *seva* and *bhakti* of Incarnations, Prophets and *Aulias.* Everybody knows what immense benefit can be conferred upon *Jivas,* who attend on and remain in the presence of a Great Soul who has perfect control over his mind and senses, whose spirit is fully awake and who is in communion with the true Supreme Being. Fortunate devotees who got opportunities of association with such Great Personalities became their sincere and devoted adherents on getting unmistakable proofs of their high status, and like ardent devotees began to live in their company but self-seekers here also played their trick and began to deceive simple devotees under various guises. Some grew matted hair, some rubbed ashes on their bodies, some made their bodies inert by smoking hemp etc and sat down to deceive others, while some began to fulfil the desires of people with the help of incantations, amulets and charms. These slaves of greed and avarice sucked the wealth of simple devotees by these methods and began to indulge in the whims and vagaries of the mind and senses without any restraint and their successors acquired big estates by improving upon their methods of fraud and deception and began to live in royal pomp and show. After the spread of English education and on the development of the faculty of discrimination and the capacity

to distinguish between good and bad, hatred for *Guru Bhakti* and for idol-worship was naturally engendered in the hearts of sensible people. It should however be considered how far the method of worship of the '*Sagun Brahma*' or the principle of *Guru Bhakti* is to blame for this. The fault really lies with those selfish people and deceitful priests and *Mujavirs*[1], who twisted the high principles of *Bhakti* with a view to gain their selfish ends and thus debased them.

Through the Grace of the Supreme Being, our community has been entrusted with the *seva* and duty to prove by our faultless conduct and bearing and selfless devotion that the principles of *Satguru Bhakti* are based on the foundation of the highest spiritual principles and that the present-day troubles of the world can be removed only by the spread of the teachings of *Bhakti* and their practice.

THE END

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1. 'Mujāvirs' is the name by which persons in charge of sacred places and shrines are known.

ERRATA

Page			Line				
Page 22	Text	Line	8	In place of	achieved	read	achieved
,, 25	,,	,,	24	,,	ond	,,	and
,, 32	,,	,,	17	,,	recitation	,,	repetition
,, 36	,,	Lines	7-8	Delete	'chastity and'		
,, 41	,,	Line	13	In place of	such	read	these
,, 49	,,	,,	14	,,	آم	,,	عام
,, 56	,,	,,	27	,,	वीरताग	,,	वीतराग
,, 65	,,	,,	8	,,	Form of Śabda	,,	Śabda Form
,, 67	,,	,,	1	,,	pleasures	,,	pleasure
,, 70	,,	,,	6	Delete comma after			'manner'
,, ,,	,,	,,	27	In place of	knwos	read	knows
,, 71	,,	,,	19	,,	be	,,	he
,, 72	,,	,,	31	,,	form	,,	from
,, 74	,,	,,	6	,,	crafts	,,	arts
,, 77	,,	,,	28	,	from	,,	form
,, 78	Notes	,,	7	Put full stop after			'turban'
,, 99	Text	,,	5	In place of	'feel remorse and have feelings of'	read	'should have feelings of remorse and'
,, 102	,,	,,	25	,,	Spreme	,,	Supreme
,, 107	,,	,,	26	,,	or cattle	,,	cattle or
,, 108	,,	,,	13	,,	Arabic	,,	Arabia
,, 111	,,	Lines	9-10	Delete	brackets		
,,	,,	,,	30	In place of	سد	read	صد
,, 115	,,	,,	11	Replace Note of Interrogation by a full stop			
,, 121	,,	,,	26	Put comma after			brackets
,, 126	,,	,,	13	In place of	Madras	read	Madrasi
,, ,,	Notes	,,	2	Delete	'in vitality'		
,, 130	Text	,,	6	In place of	failings	,,	weaknesses
,, ,,	,,	,,	18	,,	true	,,	stated in Sar Bachan

Page		Line				
Page 136	Text Line	30	Insert	'viz,' after		'difficulty'
,, 138	,, ,,	24	Put comma	after		'*Sarvasva*'
,, 145	,, ,,	10	In place of	hours	read	moments
,, ,,	,, ,,	31	,,	develop our	,,	create an
,, 147	,, ,,	25	,,	holy	,,	pure
,, 155	,, ,,	16	Delete	'the' at end of line		
,, ,,	,, ,,	18	In place of	more	read	great
,, 156	,, ,,	18	,,	overtakes	,,	befalls
,, 159	,, ,,	25	,,	birth and death	,,	births and deaths
,, 160	,, ,,	29	,,	weakness	,,	weaknesses
,, 162	,, ,,	5	,,	pleads	,,	appeals
,, 164	,, ,,	11	,,	As the persons	,,	Persons
,, ,,	,, ,,	14	Put comma	after 'tree'		
,, 171	,, ,,	18	Delete word	'the' after		'are'
,, 173	,, ,,	9	In place of	his	read	His
,, 174	,, ,,	36	,,	holy person	,,	Holy Person
,, 177	,, ,,	7	,,	this	,,	the
,, 178	,, ,,	22-23	Read words 'by their manual labour' before word			'produce'
,, 191	,, ,,	2	In place of	soons	read	soon
,, ,,	,, ,,	6	Delete comma after			'destroyed'
,, 200	,, ,,	3	Put comma	after		'this'
,, 204	,, ,,	25	Delete comma after			'westerners'
,, 209	,, ,,	24	In place of	carefully	read	vigilantly
,, 212	,, ,,	25	,,	jungle	,,	forest
,, 214	,, ,,	7	Add word	'only' after		'scenery'
,, 218	,, ,,	17	Add word	'the' before		'Merciful'
,, 220	,, ,,	3	In place of	that	read	as
,, 221	,, ,,	1	,,	alone	,,	atone
,, 222	Notes ,,	2	Add word	'of' after		'Lord'

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(The letter 'n' placed after words indicates that those words will be found in the Notes at the bottom of pages)

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7	Nij Updesh	,,	,, 70	1	0	0
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9	Sar Updesh	,,	,, 125	1	4	0
10	Prashnottar	,,	,, 54	1	0	0
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